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LECTURES ON PREACHING,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE THEOLOGICAL DEPARTMENT OF YALE COLLEGE.

BY

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A BISHOP IN THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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change expressions which were intended for the lecture-room rather than for the published volume.

The Lectures are now submitted not only to the Classes which heard them, but to all Students for the Ministry; and, also, to the laity of the Churches, who are the friends of the Pulpit. If they shall prove in some degree beneficial to young Ministers in stimulating them to a more earnest devotion to their holy work, and to the acquisition of greater power and usefulness, the writer will feel that his labor has not been in vain.

PHILADELPHIA, *January* 24, 1879.

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LECTURES ON PREACHING.

LECTURE I.

THE NATURE AND WORK OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY.

HOW natural is it for a speaker to wish to say something before he begins! Hence, young gentlemen, I may be indulged in a few preliminary words.

First of all, I desire to express my high estimate of the practical wisdom and catholic spirit which influenced the founder of this Chair. It is, so far as I know, the first endowment of a lectureship wholly devoted to preaching. Homiletics and pastoral theology, including preaching, have long been embraced in the curriculum of the theological seminary; but this Chair singles out the one department of preaching, and devotes special attention to it. This is an index which shows the movement of Christian mind, and which, also, points to the future exaltation of preaching. Being the grand agency by which God has determined to save them that believe, it is the most important instrumentality ever committed to man; and if so, deserves more attention than would belong to a mere department of sacred rhetoric.

I have no doubt that, while it may be imperfectly filled—while some of us may add but little, if any thing, to the accumulated stores of knowledge, or be successful in presenting stronger motives to young ministers—yet there will be thoughts and suggestions uttered from time to time from this Chair, which shall awaken increasing interest among candidates for the ministry, and among Christians generally. Then the catholicity of spirit which made the platform so broad that "a minister of the Gospel of any evangelical denomination" might stand upon it, will command the approbation of the Christian world. The corporation of Yale College and its theological faculty have manifested the same enlarged and liberal spirit in selecting ministers of various Churches, and have drawn on the Old World as well as on the New. The utterances which have been already made from this desk by distinguished and talented speakers have not only reached the hearts of those classes which heard them, but have gone forth through the press, and have influenced hundreds of candidates to higher aspirations and to more thorough consecration.

I desire, also, to acknowledge specially the courtesy of the corporation and theological faculty in extending to me the invitation to occupy this Chair for the present term. Yet I do not understand the compliment to be so much personal, as an expression of their continued purpose to invite ministers from va-

rious denominations, and from different sections of the country. Had this invitation been one of ordinary character, I should have promptly declined. My ecclesiastical duties are so constant and so pressing, as to leave me but little time for preparing lectures; and the demands for labor are so numerous and so varied, that my strength is taxed to the utmost. I wished, however, to respond to this manifestation of Christian courtesy, and to aid in showing to the world that Protestant Christendom is essentially one —that while we do not wholly agree, we know at the same time how to differ and yet how to love. Besides, I found my Methodism somewhat at stake. One of your professors, whom I profoundly honor, suggested that, though busily occupied, I could at least find time to "tell my experience." So I, who am of Western birth and education, and a minister in the Methodist Episcopal Church, am here to address you, who are chiefly sons of New England, and Congregationalists in creed and Church polity. Verily the world moves! A hundred years ago this would have been an impossibility.

A few years since a distinguished journalist* published a book entitled, "What I Know about Farming." I am not sure that his success in that line would lead many to follow his footsteps, yet I have thought that the lecturer in this Chair might not inaptly term his utterances, "What I Know about

* Horace Greeley.

Preaching;" for he is not to lecture systematically on homiletics, nor on the pastoral office—a work well performed by your regular professors—but to supplement their teachings by his own experience, and by gleanings from the way-side.

Thus I meet you to-day in the hall of one of the oldest and noblest institutions of the land, and in the presence of men of mind and of might. Yet let us forget the presence of these sages, and the smiles of beauty around us, and address ourselves as fellow-students to the lesson of the hour; for such we are. We differ in age, but are one in aim and in heart. You have pursued your academic and collegiate training, and are now interested in theological investigations. Your earnest thought is turned toward the future; and the inquiry is, How can you most successfully preach the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? How rapidly the years pass away! It seems to me scarcely more than yesterday since, as a young man, I was asking myself the same question. I remember how the future opened before me, and what a responsibility pressed upon my heart as I thought of standing in the sacred desk and preaching to my fellow-men. Vast as the work seemed to me then, it has grown upon me in magnitude. Each succeeding year I behold in clearer light the importance and responsibility of the sacred office. I recognize to-day the immense vastness of the work, and my inadequacy to treat it as its importance demands; or even

to picture before you that ideal which has for years beckoned me forward, but which I have never been able to attain. I am consoled, however, by the thought that you have other instructors at whose feet you reverently sit, and who will say to you in fitting language that which I may leave unsaid. If I may even chance to vary from their teachings, or, Arminian as I am, to utter something heterodox, it may but serve to stir your thoughts, and to afford your professors an excellent opportunity to add variety to their lectures by exposing my fallacies, or by proving the unsoundness of my views.

Preaching is the chief work, but not the only work, of a Christian minister. He organizes Churches, leads the public devotions of the people, administers the ordinances, and superintends important movements both within and without his own congregation. Yet all these works bear a distinct relation to his office as a preacher; they either issue from it, or are auxiliary to it. St. Paul magnified the office of the preacher above all other departments of Church work when he said to the Corinthians: "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel."

The first great requisite to the success of the young minister is, as I think, a proper appreciation of the character of the wonderful work upon which he is entering, especially in its nature, duties, and responsibility. Only to a few prominent points can we now refer.

First, *In its origin it is ordained of God.* Other professions arise out of human wants, or are essential to human comforts. They vary according to the circumstances or the progress of humanity. The teacher is required to educate childhood and youth. The tailor, the shoemaker, and the hatter are essential to our convenience and health. The physician is needed wherever sickness prevails, the surgeon wherever accidents occur. The profession of the attorney, unknown in savage lands, is demanded where laws become complicated, and where interests become conflicting. Christian preaching arises, not so much from a perceived necessity, as from God's special ordination. So true is this, that where preaching is unknown or neglected, the demand for it is not so strong as where it is generally established and regularly maintained. Yet in all ages, where there has been worship there has been a ministry. The religious idea of the race prompts to worship, and in times of emergency or in seasons of distress to make offerings to some superior power. These offerings are made through persons in some way selected and set apart for this purpose. Savages have their incantations, their sacrifices, and their priests. The Indians of our Western wilds have their medicine-men, who not only heal the body, but profess to hold communion with the Unseen. The Chinese have their Joss-houses and their priests, even though their prayers may be written on paper

or painted on wood, and whirled round by machinery. Ancient history, in its earliest outlines, finds priests among the Egyptians, and soothsayers among the Babylonians. Phœnicia, Greece, and Rome had their deities, their temples, their oracles, and their officiating priests. They slew sacrifices, inspected the entrails, and divined the will of the gods. They were so closely connected with all the movements of the nation that assemblies were convened or broken up, war was begun or terminated, great enterprises set on foot or abandoned, as the augurs interpreted the omens or signs which they had seen. In all these cases the ceremonial was almost every thing, the instruction next to nothing. Yet among the ancients there were mysteries in various systems, which included both ceremonies and doctrines. The teachings were for the few who wished to learn, and hence received the name of *mystery*—which St. Paul transferred into the Christian writings—the word not meaning, as I think, secrecy, or what is difficult of understanding, but a system of religion, or a doctrine in that system. The priests, to a certain extent, instructed the people, and were also defenders of the poor and oppressed. The altar was a place of refuge, where the offender sought safety, and placed himself under the protection of the deity. Those who ministered at temples or altars were invested, in the estimation of the people, with a peculiar sanctity, and were supposed to hold communion with the

gods. Both in the temples and at the oracles women served as well as men. The vestal virgins were esteemed sacred, and crimes on their part, or offenses against them, were most severely punished; yet the sanctity with which they were regarded was something wholly apart from a pure and high morality. In India the priestly caste is highly esteemed; they are the students, the writers, and teachers. How the ideas of sacrifices and priesthood arose we need not now inquire. The fact stands out that always and everywhere there were officiating ministers, and that society regarded them with veneration and awe.

From Scripture history we learn that the offering of sacrifices was at least as old as the time of Abel, his offering having been in some manner visibly accepted of God. Religious instruction was also given by public teachers. We are informed by St. Jude that "Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied." This prophesying anciently embraced not only visions of the future, but instruction in religious duties. We are also informed that Noah was a preacher of righteousness, and that, coming out of the ark, he offered sacrifices. The various families and nations of the earth, descending from him, may thus have received both these ideas.

The direct and authoritative establishment of the ministry is found in the Jewish system. A whole tribe was set apart for the performance of its various functions; a specific family was selected for its ho-

lier duties. These priests read to the people, in their large convocations, from the book of the law; but the principal part of their work was a ceremonial connected with the tabernacle and the temple. The Christian minister is not, however, a successor of the Jewish priests, so far as their offering of sacrifices is concerned. In that respect the law was "a shadow of good things to come;" and Christ has come. He "is the end of" that "law for righteousness to every one that believeth." The ceremonial law must needs have been performed to make the Jew a righteous man. Our Saviour said to John the Baptist: "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." That righteousness which came by the ceremonial law is now supplanted by faith in Christ. You, young gentlemen, are not to be priests. The one, eternal, all-sufficient sacrifice has been offered by our "great High-priest that has passed into the heavens." Instead of priests, he has given to his Church "apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers." The Christian ministry of to-day more nearly resembles the prophets, who were selected by the direct will of God, without reference to tribe or family, to warn, to admonish, and to instruct, as well as to tell what should be in the coming years. To these prophets Christ himself is likened. Moses said: "The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me." And in the Epistle to the Hebrews it is said: "God, who

at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." In this speaking sense you are to be prophets rather than priests. The divine appointment of the Christian ministry is specifically set forth in the New Testament. Christ selected his twelve apostles. He had called them individually to follow him; he had gathered them around him for instruction; but their sending forth was a public, solemn act. He had retired into a mountain; all night he had been in prayer; and when it was day he called his disciples around him, and out of them he chose twelve, whom he sent abroad to preach the Gospel and to heal all manner of diseases. Christ represents himself as sent into the world to preach. He says: "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent." And he quoted as applicable to himself the well-known prophecy of Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor." In his inimitable prayer he says of his disciples: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." Among his last words were those of the great commission: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." In entering into the ministry, then, you ally yourselves with God himself; you take upon you an office which he himself has specifically ordained.

Secondly, *The greatness of the ministerial office is also seen from the nature of its work.* This is illustrated by comparing it to various earthly offices and duties. The word "preach," in its primary signification, means to proclaim. *Kerux*, a herald, was an officer carrying and announcing a message, and was usually sent by a king, or by a commanding officer in the army. His message was short, and was given without explanations or reasons. So John the Baptist simply proclaimed: "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" In the same way Christ entered on his own ministry; and when the disciples were first sent forth, the simple message he gave them was, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." The man was a herald or preacher, no matter what the character of the tidings which he bore. Jonah was sent to the Ninevites, and his brief message was: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." So, also, Nehemiah was accused of appointing preachers to proclaim himself king.

As the Gospel was unfolded, this idea of a herald was enlarged by making it the bearer of good tidings; and, instead of heralding, we have evangelizing. Instead of Christ saying as he did to his disciples at first, "Go heralding," we have in the great commission, "Go discipling." You are sent forth not only to cry—not only to *cry*, "All flesh is grass;" but to *cry* also, "The word of the Lord endureth forever." Your office is not to speak of yourselves, not to speak

words which the wisest men have uttered, but to speak the message which God has given. This message of glad tidings he has put in writing. It has been printed. We have it in our hands. It is made "plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."

The office of an embassador is one of the highest that can be filled by a citizen. He bears a message from his Government—a message to which he may not add, and from which he must not subtract. His words are the words of the nation; his person is secured by the power of the nation; he represents in person the honor and dignity of the nation. The grander and stronger the Government, the greater is the embassador. What, then, must be an embassador for Christ? If you enter on this office, you are embassadors sent by Christ to represent him, and to utter his words to all the people. He is pledged to care for you, and to protect you; and you are not to think of yourselves as your own, but as belonging to Christ. You are to take his words and utter them in the ears of the people, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.

The preacher is represented as a watchman. "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem!" The Lord said to Ezekiel: "Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me." The watchman guards the city; the lives of the people are in his hands; his post is one of in-

finite moment. Your office is to watch against enemies, against dangers. It requires a firm purpose, a sleepless eye. Often on the ocean I have gone to the prow of the vessel and looked out into the darkness of the night. I ever found a watchman there not one moment from his post—his eye gazing far over the sea, where he might discern at the greatest distance, and at the earliest moment, any cause of possible danger. The lives of the crew and passengers were in his hands. The mist might come down heavily, the wind might blow furiously, the storm rage incessantly, but still on and ever the watchman looks out in the one direction. The whales may spout in multitudes around the vessel, or the whole sea behind may be in a phosphorescent glow, but he heeds them not. His one great duty is to look ahead. So you are watchmen; you are on the ship; the vessel may be running toward shore; there may be breakers ahead, and you are to sound the alarm! False teachers may be around you; the literature of the day may be corrupting; you may find infidel ideas spread among your people; the youth may be in danger of being ensnared and led astray. You are God's commissioned watchmen, to guard them from danger.

This very naturally leads us to think of the ministry as a work. It is so in all its forms, from beginning to end, from youth to age. "If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." Jesus said to his disciples: "Work while it is called to-

day." Paul and Barnabas were "separated for the work" whereunto they were called. We are "workers together with God." This work is compared sometimes to a vineyard, in which the minister is to bear the burden and heat of the day. St. Paul speaks of him as a "husbandman that laboreth," and he directed Timothy to be "a workman." He also said: "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in word and doctrine." And again: "The laborer is worthy of his reward." Christ says: "Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." No labor is heavier than that of the harvest field, especially as performed in ancient times. Some of us who are older remember well the severity of the labor, when we bent all day over the leaning grain in the rays of the hot sun. The field was large, the grain was caught handful by handful while the sickle reaped, and night came only to give a short rest to gather strength for the next day. Such is your work. "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest." The field is already white. That field is the world: you are the reapers; the grain is ripe and ready to perish. "He that reapeth receiveth wages." Some of the grain is falling, and the plaintive voice is on the breeze, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and I am not saved." If you have ever looked at the ministry as a life of ease, either abandon the

thought, or at once abandon the ministry. It is a busy hive, with no room for drones. There is work in the pulpit, and work out of the pulpit; work in the study, and work out of the study; work publicly and work privately. Paul worked, preaching and warning the people from house to house, by night and by day. Of the disciples it is said: "Daily, in the temple and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus." St. Augustine says: "Nothing in this life is more difficult, laborious, and dangerous than the life of a presbyter." Luther says: "The labors of a minister exhaust the very marrow from the bones, and hasten forward old age and death." Of the man who hid his talent it is said: "Thou wicked and slothful servant." Slothfulness is represented as the height of wickedness. Men may afford to take their ease in other callings; they may rest in the heat of the day, or take shelter from the storm, but the minister must not, *dare* not, rest. Nor will there ever be invented moral mowing-machines to take the place of the old-fashioned sickles of the pulpit.

The minister not only labors, but he serves. The word *minister* signifies a servant. It once had not the honor and dignity which to-day is attached to it. St. Paul repeatedly calls himself "a servant of Jesus Christ," or, as you well know, young gentlemen, a *slave.* When he alluded to his preaching he said: "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the

Lord; and ourselves your servants for Christ's sake.' Christ set us an example by girding himself and washing his disciples' feet. He arrayed himself in the garb of a servant. "He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." It is added: "So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." We cannot mistake such a lesson as this. Our work is a service; the poorest and the weakest have claims upon us. We are also informed that the way to true greatness is through service—"He that will be the greatest among you, let him be the servant of all."

We have also the example of Christ in his general service to humanity. He says: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister." We find him "always doing good." He comforted

the sorrowing, poured sight upon the blind, opened the deaf ears, and raised the sick from beds of affliction. He passed by no form of degradation, no loathsomeness of disease. He touched the poor outcast leper, and made him clean. What a busy life of service did Jesus lead! On foot he traveled over the hills and valleys of Palestine. He preached in the temple and in the synagogues; on the mountain-side and by the shore of the sea; to vast congregations and to single individuals. He taught the multitudes all day, and spent parts of the night on the mountain-side in prayer; talked to his disciples while they walked, until, hungry, they plucked the heads of wheat to eat. Weary he sat down at the well of Jacob, and yet, in his weariness, spoke those words of life that still thrill the world. That sublime utterance, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," is still ringing through the earth. He was never too weary to do good.

The service we owe is the service, first, of body, soul, and spirit to God, which the apostle declares a reasonable service—consecrated to God, devoted perpetually to him, as a sacrifice, slain, and yet living. Then we owe a service to humanity. As Christ gave himself to the service of the world, so he dedicates all who are consecrated to him to a like service. That service is, teaching the children, comforting the sorrowing relieving the poor and wretched, following

the wanderer, reclaiming the prodigal, bringing home the outcast, lifting up the downtrodden, removing burdens from the oppressed, visiting the prisoner, substituting smiles for frowns, and blessings for curses. It is to purify, elevate, and ennoble society every-where. There is not a human being within the sphere of his influence to whom he is not a debtor. St. Paul says: "I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise." This obligation rests upon us, because we are stewards of the manifold grace of God. He has given us the knowledge of the truth, the experience of grace; not for ourselves alone, but for others. The steward who embezzles for himself the money intrusted to his care to be paid to others is no more guilty than the minister who, receiving gifts of grace for all around him, fails to bestow those gifts upon those for whom they were designed.

The ground of your working for men is not their deserts; you teach them not because they deserve to be taught, but because God has given you his truth, and has sent you to save them. You are never to turn away from any one because he neglects you, misrepresents you, or maltreats you. The worse the man is, the more imperative is the duty to try to save him; the nearer he is to ruin, the more intense should be your effort to rescue him. Christ stooped from heaven to save men; and the minister must stoop to rescue the lowest of the low. So, as a good house-

holder, you are to bring out of the treasury things both new and old, and to offer a wedding-garment to every guest, that he may sit down to the table when the Master shall appear.

The Church of God is represented under the figure of a temple. We are builders. The foundation is composed of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone. Slowly, yet surely, the edifice rises; member after member is joined into its rising structure, as living stones. Some of the materials we place in that building are as gold and silver and precious stones—educated, trained, polished, Christlike. But in our haste and indolence we are liable to introduce others, which are like wood, hay, and stubble. They will not stand the day of God's examination. The great Architect casts them away, and our labor is lost. We ourselves, if so happy as to be in that grand edifice, shall be tried as by fire.

You are shepherds set by the Lord Jesus to watch over the flock which he has purchased with his own blood. You are to rescue and bring back any wandering sheep. You are soldiers in the army of Christ, marshaled under the Captain of our salvation. The enemies are around; the contest thickens; you are commanded to go forward. Where the battle rages hottest, there is the post of honor. How constantly should the arms be ready, that the word of command may be obeyed! And yet, how prone are we to

lag behind, and to wish for hours of safety and of ease.

Thirdly, *The transcendent greatness of the ministry is seen in the results to be achieved.* As a teacher, the minister takes the word of God to instruct the multitude; but his teaching far surpasses in its scope the teachings of the schools. Their field is limited, this is infinite. It reaches from eternity to eternity. Its glance is over all matter, and it treats of angels and of God. The professors in college, the lecturers in universities, are well satisfied when they have imparted the truth clearly, and when their students comprehend it; but at that point the teaching of the minister is but begun. The raw recruit in the army understands the word of command, and knows what is to be done, but fails to perform correctly or gracefully. The young lady at her piano knows the notes, understands the keys of her instrument, perceives what keys ought to be touched; but untrained fingers fail to bring out the music. The minister may teach his audience the doctrine of repentance, may explain its nature and mode, and still his work is but begun. He is not merely to teach his audience how to repent, but to bring them to repentance; not to teach merely the nature of prayer, but to bring his congregation to pray. He is not merely to present the cross of Christ, but to lead the people to its foot. He is not merely to tell of the forgiveness of sin, and of the conscious joy of redeeming love, but to bring his

sympathizing hearers into the full enjoyment of those glorious blessings. How transcendently glorious, and yet how difficult, the work of the preacher! He stands before an audience of hundreds of souls. They are of every possible grade. Some are Christians of partial maturity; some are babes in Christ; some are thoughtful inquirers; some are unawakened sinners; some are hardened scoffers; some are professed infidels; some are moral and honest in their outward lives; others are intemperate, profane, lustful, or covetous. To that assembly he presents the Lord Jesus Christ. He holds up before them, as though he saw him, the blessed Saviour, as if present before them. He exhibits him in his majesty and in his condescension, in his purity and in his compassion, in his omnipotence and in the boundlessness of his love. He cries: "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world!" "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth!" As he holds this divine Saviour before the eyes of his congregation, and bears witness of his power, they see and feel, repent and believe. The heart which at first says,

> "Depth of mercy! can there be
> Mercy still reserved for me?"

looking at this holy vision, feels a glorious change, and exultingly cries out,

> "God is love! I know, I feel:
> Jesus weeps, and loves me still."

His precious promise is fulfilled: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me."

Your work, young gentlemen, is to take that multitudinous assemblage of variant characters, circumstances, and habits, and bring them into the image of Christ. Those weak, imperfect, impure, and sinful beings must be transformed into the likeness of the glorious Saviour. Your work is expressed in the language of the apostle: "Whom we preach, warning every man, teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." And again: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." What a sublime picture is here presented! The making every man to stand in the stature of Christ—not faintly, not partially, but in the fullness of Christ. This is the unity of Christianity. His grand purpose is "to gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." The transformation is a glorious one, for "we all, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." This exhibition of Christ before the eyes and hearts of the multitude, that all may see and repent, believe and enjoy, is Christian preaching. It is the word of God presented by one divinely commissioned, and so accompanied by the power of the

Holy Spirit that men are transformed from sinners to saints. Can this be done? It was done by the apostles. We have the same word; we are men of like passions; we have the same accompanying Spirit; men need the same transformation. Is the congregation like rough blocks from the quarry, from which the beautiful image is to be freed by the tool of the sculptor? Are they like wild trees, whose useless branches must be cut off, and whose superabundant twigs must be pruned? God has given us the instrument: "The word of God is quick and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight." Nor can that word fail; for "as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." No marvel that the evangelical prophet, in exultation at the glorious thought, exclaims: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the fields shall clap their hands. Instead

of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree ; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign which shall not be cut off." What an exhibition of the renewing power of the Gospel! Earth's curse was, that it should bring forth thorns and thistles. But when man is regenerated that curse seems to pass away ; when the Gospel, under the preaching of true Christian preachers, shall have filled the whole earth, then, indeed, will there be a new heaven and a new earth. Until that time we must preach on. Nor must we be diverted from our work by any suggestion that society cannot be reformed, or that the Lord Jesus will come visibly to cut off the wicked and to reign as a temporal king. I have respect for good men who teach this doctrine, but none for the doctrine itself. Analyzed, it shows a lack of faith in the power of God's word ; a spirit of indolence, that is unwilling to face calmly and patiently the thought of long ages of toil and sacrifice ; a spirit of vengeance, that calls for fire to come down from heaven. They think it easier to *kill* men than to *convert* them.

Fourthly, *This preaching is to be a perpetual agency*. Other systems may change, other plans may fail ; but this *never*. It is the sovereign decree of the Almighty God, that by preaching the Gospel of his Son men shall be saved. To the Jew this preaching was a stumbling-block. It took from him all his splendid ceremonials. His temple was no longer the

exclusively holy place. Jerusalem was no longer to be the central home of God's people; the Jewish race was no longer the peculiar people of God. The whole earth was to be a worshiping temple. Walls of partition were to be broken down, all races to be brought on one platform, and all humanity to become kings and priests to God. No wonder it was to him a stumbling-block. But to the Greek—the lover of wisdom and philosophy—the man devoted to science—it was foolishness. To such minds it is foolishness still. The Greek remembered the glorious record of his nation for centuries previous—a record of poets, painters, sculptors, historians, statesmen, and warriors. To him his nation was the center of knowledge and civilization. Athens was the concentration of the refinement, culture, and mental power of the world. It had ruled in other days by its learning more than by its arms. To him the highest attainment of humanity was the knowledge of art, literature, and science. The pencil of Apelles, the chisel of Praxiteles, the oratory of Demosthenes, the academic teachings of Plato, the practical philosophy of Socrates, the keen logic of Aristotle, the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, the poetry of Homer and Euripides, the statesmanship of Pericles, and the military deeds of Miltiades, were the glory of the nation. Their books, academies, and temples were the honor of the land. These were the marks of their civilization, and the indices of their future glory.

To be told that all this was insignificant; that the only way to triumph over the passions and impulses of the heart, the only ascent to the favor of God, and to future grandeur and glory, was to come from telling the story of a crucified Saviour; that by exhibiting before the minds of the people one who was a Jew by birth, but who said he was the Son of God—one of pure, spotless life, and yet crucified between thieves—buried in a tomb guarded by Roman soldiers, and yet who rose the third day, lived on earth for a time, and then ascended to heaven—earth's whole aspect would be changed: to be told that belief in him was the only way by which humanity could gain purity, happiness, and a higher civilization, can we wonder that they said, "It is foolishness?" Men of science say so to-day; and yet by that preaching, which they call "foolishness," it is God's eternal and immutable purpose to save them that believe. It has so saved in the past; it is saving still. It has been the light of our civilization, and its beams are scattering the darkness of the world.

Some tell us that society has changed; that the pulpit has lost its power; that men will no longer be attracted. But every now and then a preacher rises who attracts the multitude, and rivets their attention upon the truth. Such men are given to us to show the possibilities of the pulpit, and to point to a time when, instead of decreasing, it shall accomplish grander results. Some tell us that the press has superseded the pulpit; that men need no longer be

hearers, because they are readers. The Bible is in their hands ; and if they need expositions or explanations, they have the works of great commentators. Why should they hear sermons, or listen to preachers of little experience, and of only average mental strength and culture? But they forget the human element: the power of man over his fellow-men ; the force derived from experience ; the visible embodiment of ideal truth. Preaching is not merely, as I have said, the delivery of the message, but the delivery of the message by a man who professes to have felt its power, and who testifies to its truth in his own experience. The preacher not only proclaims the truth, but stands as a personal witness of its saving power. In other matters men rely on the same influences. What political party would go into an excited canvass relying merely on articles from the press? The press is, indeed, a valuable auxiliary. It reports the strong thoughts of the clear thinkers ; but every party must have its conventions, its evening meetings, its stump speakers. Without these it fails. What would the temperance reformation be without these speakers, who themselves have been reformed? What would Murphy's influence be through the press alone? It is the man who was a drunkard reduced to wretchedness, and who was in jail when the word of God found him, recovered him, and elevated him, that they crowd to hear. When that man stands before an audience, tells the story of his fall, his sor-

row, his wretchedness, and then of his repentance, his reformation, his triumph over appetite, and his happiness, the hearts of men are stirred, and many a captive spirit longs for liberty. Who cares to read the lectures of a Gough? And yet, though he tells the same story over and over, the largest edifices are crowded almost beyond endurance to hear him. Wendell Phillips has been for more than thirty years hunting for "the lost arts;" the synopsis of his lecture has been published over and over again; and yet those who have read and those who have heard him hasten to hear him again. The words of Shakspeare, which are in almost every library, yet, uttered by men of dramatic power, draw to the theater crowds for sometimes a hundred successive nights. It is the man, who embodies and impersonates the ideas, which they wish to see and hear. Some things never grow old. The songs our mothers sung to us in childhood are still the sweetest music to our ears. "Now I lay me down to sleep" was the evening prayer of Quincy Adams, when in the presidential chair. The very men who denounce the pulpit as a failure, and declare it to be superseded, are themselves unwilling to trust the press alone. The notorious Ingersoll, who denounces Christianity and denies the being of a God, is unwilling to trust to his writings, but eagerly mounts the platform to address the people. Thus he "steals," not "the livery," but the agency, "of heaven, to serve the devil in." Eras-

mus says: "The devil is a preacher; he preached to Eve, and seduced the human race."

Christian preaching shall never fail. The great Commander uttered his orders of march centuries ago. He never changes his plans, and will not be defeated. His ascending orders were, "Go preach!" and these stand good until he come again. Into what an illustrious company does the young minister enter! When Isaiah beheld them in vision he exclaimed: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord shall bring again Zion."

The long line of preachers extends in unbroken succession from Christ himself to the present hour. A line, did I say? More than a line—a pyramid of which he is the apex, which, each succeeding year, rises in altitude and widens in its base, and will rise, and will widen, until it covers all lands, and the living preacher shall be seen and heard by every child of Adam on the globe. It is an unbroken succession—not by the ordinations of men, nor by the hands of men, nor by the will of men, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a holy fellowship, a glorious association. It has had its spots. All have been men of like passions with us. Some entered the ministry

without a divine call; others have been overborne by passion. Some "concerning the faith have made shipwreck, of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander;" "Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world." Peter denied his Master, and Judas betrayed him. Men have disgraced themselves, and brought reproach upon the office; but it still lives and strengthens, because Christ lives with it, and has determined that it shall stand. He walks among the candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand.

Lastly, *Pause a moment to think of your responsibility.* You enter this holy brotherhood; you take upon you holy vows; you perform sacred functions. If you faithfully proclaim the Saviour; if you skillfully handle the two-edged sword; if you wisely pierce between the sinner and his sins; if you earnestly exhibit the Lord Jesus in all his beauty; if you live for this one work alone; if you study, pray, preach, and visit, to make all men like Christ, then your reward will be glorious. The promise is: "They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Star may differ from star in glory, but all shall be radiant with the light of Jehovah's face. But should you handle the word of God deceitfully; should you, as embassadors, forget God's message, and tell your own words; should you forget the Majesty which sent you, and court the applause of the people to whom you are sent; should

you woo their smiles or court their favor, neglecting the message which God bids you preach ; should you, as watchmen, see the sword coming, and give no alarm ; should you, as stewards, embezzle the goods which God gives you for others ; should you, as builders, put in wood, hay, and stubble ; should you, as pastors, devour the flocks you are sent to feed ; should you, as soldiers, fly from the field in the day of battle ; should your trumpet give an uncertain sound, and souls go down to ruin through your negligence and fault, who can measure the awful consequences ? I shudder when I think of what is in the range of possibilities, and of the terrible inquisition which God shall make, when he shall ask, Where is your brother ? and your ears are opened to hear the voice of his blood crying from the ground. Better would it be never to have been born ; better would it be were millstones hanged around your necks, and you cast into the depths of the sea ; better that rocks and mountains might fall upon you, to hide you from "the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb." "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak."

LECTURE II.

THE CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

THE subject which next demands our attention is, The *personnel* of the ministry, or who should enter that sacred office. Two points are worthy of special consideration: First, Do the Scriptures teach that there is a special call to the work of the ministry? Secondly, If so, by what evidence may a young man be assured that he is so called?

The reasonableness of a divine call may be inferred from the structure of the Church, and the titles given to it. It is the body of Christ, himself being the glorious Head. As the brain directs the human frame, so does Christ the Church. All the plans are from him.

The Church is represented as a kingdom over which Christ reigns. Though invisible, he inspires its movements, and has promised to be present with his ministers. They are his agents, his embassadors; they stand in his stead. Every earthly government selects the embassadors which it sends. It would be an offense to its majesty for one not selected by itself to appear as its representative. So we may well suppose that Christ selects his own ministers, whom

he sends forth to proclaim his message, and to promote the interests of his kingdom.

The Church is a vast army. The Captain of our salvation directs its movements. It is his prerogative to select the officers who are to marshal this army, and to appoint them to their places, that the great plans of his campaign may be carefully carried out. He is the great Shepherd of the sheep. He owns the flock for which he gave his life. It is his right to appoint pastors after his own heart to feed that flock.

Another indication is found in the Jewish dispensation. God selected the tribe of Levi and the family of Aaron to minister before him. From time to time he raised up prophets as teachers, judges, and leaders of the people, selected at his own pleasure. So might we not expect that in the Christian dispensation the teachers should be chosen by himself?

We are not left, however, to mere conjecture or reason in a matter so important. The example of Christ is authoritative. Early in his ministry he selected a few disciples, and enjoined them to follow him. After their number had increased, he chose twelve by name for a special office. Subsequently he selected seventy, whom he set apart, and whom he sent forth—to go before him into every city, to preach and to do wonderful works in his name. After his resurrection he commissioned his disciples to go "into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creat-

ure," enjoining upon them, at the same time, to tarry in Jerusalem until they were "endued with power from on high." After his ascension Matthias was selected by lot to fill the place of Judas, after prayer had been offered that God would show whom he had chosen. St. Paul, also, was in a miraculous manner directly called to the work of the ministry. It is remarkable how frequently he refers to the fact of his calling. Many of his epistles commence with the declaration that he is "an apostle called of God," or "by the commandment of God," or "by the will of God." He indicates, also, the divine selection of Timothy, when he says: "Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee."

After the ascension of Christ we find a difference in the mode of the call. When he selected his twelve disciples, and when he set apart the seventy, he spake to each one audibly. He made the selection visibly and publicly, that all might know and recognize their authority. So when Paul was added to the apostles, though Christ had ascended to heaven, yet he appeared to him near Damascus, took the persecutor captive, and appointed him to the work of the ministry. But the period of this direct, or audible, call passed away. Neither by a voice from heaven, nor by the light of divine glory, nor by any other external agency, was it directly given. It came, however, none the less from Christ. He ascended on high, and received gifts for men. And it is added:

"He gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Thus the selection of those given to the Church was in the hands of its great Head, who had "sat down on the right hand of God; . . . expecting till his enemies be made his footstool." If any change were made in the economy of the Church in this respect, it is incumbent on those who allege this change to produce their authority. But no such authority can be found. The true minister, in the present as in the apostolic age, is called of the Lord Jesus to his sacred office. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Such were the teachings of the ancient Church. St. Chrysostom says: "No man, nor angel, nor archangel, nor created power, but the Paraclete himself, has instituted this office, and chosen beings yet living in the flesh to fulfill the ministry of angels." Such, also, has been the teaching of the Church, in its leading branches, down to the present time. In several of them every candidate for the ministry is required to say that he believes he is "moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the work of the ministry."

In what, then, does the divine call consist? or how is a young man to be perfectly assured that he is called of God? This question is of immense moment to every young minister. Without this assurance, in

moments of darkness, temptation, and despondency, he will be assailed with doubts; he will question whether he was ever called to preach; he will be led to inquire whether it is not his duty to abandon the ministry. The more strictly conscientious he is, the deeper will be his questionings, and the greater his perplexity. But if he doubts, he is shorn of much of his power. The doubter never accomplishes much: "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways." The man of deep conviction, even though he occasionally errs, is the man of power. Thomas, who, I suppose, seldom made a mistake, is never heard of except in asking questions or expressing doubts; and, so far as New Testament history goes, he is not mentioned in the early, triumphant spread of the Gospel. While Peter, confident even to boldness and recklessness, received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, to open its doors to the Gentile world.

The first evidence of a divine call is in the consciousness of the individual, and is a persuasion which, slight as it may be at first, deepens into an intense conviction that he is called of God to preach the Gospel. There is not quite so much unanimity among writers or Churches as to the mode of this call, as to the fact of the call itself. Some writers of distinguished talent and of high position distinguish between what they term the ordinary and the extraordinary call. In the ordinary call, they teach that the young man arrives at the conviction that he

should preach, from the consideration of his qualifications, mental tendencies, and surrounding circumstances; that the same influences lead him to enter the ministry, which, with some changes, would have led him to enter the profession of medicine or law, or to engage in some special secular pursuit. He simply follows the indications of Providence manifested in his own nature and in the world around him. These are found in his physical power, intellectual capacity, fondness for study, readiness of utterance, benevolent tendency, and religious life. He beholds around him a world lying in wickedness. Men are going astray. He has felt in his own heart the love of God, with an accompanying desire to do all the good he can, and looks upon the work of the ministry as a work of benevolence and love. He believes that he could be useful in teaching the ignorant, and in elevating the aspirations of the young; in holding the attention of congregations, and in persuading them to believe the word of the Lord. He reasons within himself, and says, that as a minister he thinks he could do more good than as a physician; that he feels an aversion to attending the sick, almost a horror of surgical operations, a doubt whether he could bear the frequent loss of sleep or the intense strain of anxiety connected with the profession, or whether he could confront the dangers which terrible epidemics might impose. He has some scruples in reference to the law; has a vague idea that possibly he could

scarcely keep a good conscience amid the solicitation of clients and the temptation of fees. He even doubts whether he is quite fitted for the quick repartee and for the acrimonious controversy which so often occur; and whether he could bear the responsibility of having the life of a man dependent upon the success with which he might be able to plead his cause before a jury. So he selects the ministry, honestly and sincerely believing that thereby he can best promote his own happiness and the welfare of humanity.

This, I believe, is a fair statement of the views held by those who regard the selection of the ministry as determined merely by the questions of qualification and adaptation. I have purposely omitted the influence of unworthy motives, such as the consideration of the ministry affording a comfortable livelihood, or of seeking to be "put in the priest's office for a piece of bread;" or motives arising from the pulpit being a forum, where eloquence might be displayed, oratorical power exhibited, and applause gained; or the consideration of the association of the ministry being with that class of the community which is most intelligent, tasteful, and enterprising. Even these last motives may properly be considered in selecting a mere secular employment or profession; but those first enumerated are essential to any proper choice of business by a Christian man. For by providential indications one may feel satisfied that it is best to

commence a certain employment, and that in it the approbation of God will rest upon him. Yet this is not what I think the Scriptures teach by a divine call. Paul did not enter the ministry because he had been schooled in Cilicia, or had been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, or had superior powers of logic or oratory, or because he preferred it to some other occupation. He preached because he had received from Christ authority and a command to preach the Gospel. He was directly sent; as Jesus had said, "As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you." So was it with all the apostles. I do not deny that the motives named may be worthy of consideration in their appropriate place. They may be regarded as coincident with and confirmatory of a higher call. But I believe the true call to the ministry contains a supernatural element not embraced in this description of an ordinary call.

The extraordinary call of such writers, or what I deem the true call to the ministry, does not consist in any audible voice, in any vision or dream, or in any extraordinary external circumstances. The message which God sends is spiritual. Like a still, small voice, it influences the inner nature, and is extraordinary only in that it is a special divine communication. In its slightest form it is a persuasion that he who receives it *ought* to preach the Gospel; in its strongest form, that God requires him to do this work at the peril of his soul. Even in its faintest

form there is this distinction between a call to the ministry and a choice of other professions: a young man may *wish* to be a physician; he may *desire* to enter the army; he would *like* to be a farmer; but he feels he *ought* to be a minister. It is this feeling of OUGHT, or obligation, which, in its feeblest form, indicates the divine call. It is not in the aptitude, taste, or desire, but in the conscience, that its root is found. It is God's voice to the human conscience, saying, "You ought to preach."

In cases where children have been dedicated to the ministry, where the heart has early submitted to divine influence, and where associations and studies have been directed to this one end, it may, for a time, be difficult to distinguish between the purpose, or expectation, and the feeling of duty. That feeling becomes strongest when there is a conflict of motives; but in the depraved human heart that conflict will surely arise. The holiness connected with the idea of preaching is not in harmony with man's native tendency; and even in those who are religious from childhood the strength of that native tendency will sooner or later be manifest.

The conviction that one ought to preach may arise prior to conversion. Especially is this the case where the young man has been blessed with a religious education, and has been the subject of deep religious impressions, though he has not fully yielded his heart to God. A few cases I have known, where

thoughtful, talented, and generally conscientious young men have stumbled at this point. They have feared to submit themselves wholly to the divine will, lest it might be their duty to preach the Gospel. But never are such persons converted until they are willing to be and to do whatever God may require. Generally, however, the impression that one is called to the ministry arises after conversion. Sometimes it comes in the very moment of conversion ; and, with the peace that calms the troubled spirit, there is a yearning to bring the world to the foot of the cross. Usually this conviction arises in the early stages of a religious life, and especially when the young Christian begins to speak and pray in the social meetings. Then a greater work rises before him, and he feels it to be his duty to persuade sinners to be reconciled to God. In some cases this impression gradually unfolds itself like the dawning of the morning before the rising of the sun. In other cases it comes almost with the suddenness and dazzling power of the lightning's flash.

Admitting the existence of this conviction, how is it known to be of divine origin ? Consciousness tells us the persuasion is there ; but how can we know whence it comes ? I think there is nothing unphilosophical in referring it to a pure spiritual source, even to God himself. In this respect it resembles the work of conversion. Peace springs up in the heart, but whence that peace comes consciousness

alone cannot tell. Yet the true Christian at once, and correctly, ascribes it to a divine source.

There is a school of philosophy, represented by Coleridge, which admits the existence of religious impressions on the human mind, and that they come from a divine source; but it denies that any man can affirm that the impression he has is from God. They say we can have no knowledge of the origin of our impressions, because they are known to us only through consciousness; this consciousness, being only a knowledge of our own internal states, can give us no information of their origin; and hence, while admitting that the Christian is born of God, it is denied that we can have any knowledge of it except by way of inference from our mental states. The same reasoning is applied to the doctrine of the ministerial call. That is, a young man may be truly called of God, but it is impossible for him to know it except by way of inference from surrounding indications. This philosophy I believe to be radically defective.

I have not time now to enter into a metaphysical disquisition. This lectureship is not the place. Yet I believe that the same mental constitution which necessitates us to refer some internal impressions to external, visible, and material objects, leads us, with equal force and certainty, to refer other impressions to external, invisible, and spiritual sources. You well know, young gentlemen, that, strictly speaking, we know nothing of the material world.

We have sensations, or impressions, within us; we know them only by consciousness; but by a law of our nature, antecedent to, quicker and stronger than reasoning, we refer these impressions to an external source; and, in common life, no man doubts that he sees, hears, and touches a material world. It is only the philosopher who reasons and doubts. But, amid the impressions within us, there are some we cannot refer to visible matter. They either spring up within us from some law of our being, or they come to us from some invisible source. And I repeat, there is nothing more unphilosophical in referring an impression which is not of ourselves to a spiritual, than to a material, origin. The fact that men do refer certain mental impressions to an invisible origin is the foundation of all religious faith. It gives the conviction of the unseen, though that unseen may be unknown. Fancy paints it in its own colors, and wild have been the imaginings about ghosts and demons in various forms.

The reference to external nature is verified by our senses. The different senses give corroborative and cumulative testimony until absolute certainty is produced. The impressions as to the invisible are corroborated and confirmed by revelation. In that we find there is an invisible world of spirit and angel; there we find that in our creation God breathed upon us, and we became living souls; that in the new dispensation Christ breathed upon his disciples, and

they received the Holy Ghost, and became new creatures. Hence we learn, first, the possibility of the blessed Saviour breathing on our hearts, creating impressions within us. We learn, further, that he is the source of the pure and holy; that every thing good and perfect comes from above. By our own consciousness we know that what arises within us of ourselves is tainted, and oftentimes impure. When, then, impressions of purity and holiness and spiritual grandeur fill our hearts, we have the right to believe that these come from God; and the word of God assures us that they do so come, for it tells us that the fruit of the Spirit is peace, and love, and joy, with other graces. But there is more than this. He gives us his Spirit, that we may know the things freely given us of God. It is said, in the story of creation, that when the earth was without form, and void, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and the first great act in that movement was the creation of light; so when the Spirit of God moves upon the darkness and emptiness of the human soul, its creative fiat is, "Let there be light." As the blind man, whose eyes Jesus opened, gazed first on his heavenly countenance, so the light of grace on the human soul leads it directly to God, and the first utterance is, "Abba, Father." As the young convert has the assurances drawn by his own spirit from the peace and love within him, he has, also, that heavenly influence which seems to radiate his

soul, and makes him feel that the Spirit of God bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God. So in this call to the ministry, there is not only the impression of duty to preach, but, as it is accompanied by intense love to God, and intense yearning for the salvation of men, and for the eradication of all evil from the earth, it must come from a pure and spiritual source. But, over and above all that, there is such a sweet tenderness, so much of heavenly influence, so much of divine light, that one feels assured that it is of God. I must add, however, that no impression can be any rule of conduct beyond what is directly authorized in the word of God. To follow impressions beyond that is simply fanaticism.

Admitting, however, that this knowledge is not absolute, but merely strongly presumptive, there are other indications which are confirmative. We are commanded to "try the spirits, whether they be of God;" and we have tests by which that trial can be made. The first is, that this call to the ministry comes to one who has felt the breathing of the Spirit in his regeneration. He recognizes the same Spirit now. Its drawings have the same tenderness, its influences have the same love, its whisperings have the same accent. The deeper the personal consecration, the nearer the soul is drawn toward God, the more earnest the yearning to save the world, the persuasion grows stronger; but when worldly influences

and associations prevail, its whispers are more faint.

Again, it cannot come from our own suggestions. We are fond of mirthfulness, gayety, amusement, wealth, honor, fame. We love the associations and approbation of the world. The pulpit calls us away from these. Serious duties, anxious cares, constant labor, and comparative poverty, occupy their place. Many of the wise men of the world, whose approval we love, say preaching is "foolishness." Not one of the immense throngs that rush into life's earthly joys cares to turn his thoughts to the pulpit. Nor can the suggestion come from the evil one, for its yearning is to overthrow the kingdom of darkness. The Saviour himself refers to this test when he says: "If Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how, then, shall his kingdom stand? But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

Another test, is the fact that this desire is usually in direct antagonism to natural inclination and previous purpose. The young man not only does not desire to preach, but he is unwilling. He had already formed plans for other professions or business, his heart was set on a favorite pursuit, when he is interfered with by this call. It seems to take from him all his cherished plans, and all his bright visions of fame and glory. It not only interferes with his own plans, but oftentimes with those of his parents

and friends. They are so deeply grieved that even a father threatens to disinherit or to disown him. Yet in the midst of all these difficulties, the persuasion grows stronger that he must preach the Gospel. It sometimes becomes so intense that it is seldom from his mind. In the hours of his solitude, and in his lonely walks, he will even wring his hands, and say: "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel." He feels that he *must* preach, or imperil his soul's salvation.

In addition to all this, difficulties will frequently arise, almost in the form of angels of light. The ministry is so holy, so exalted, and he is so imperfect and has so many infirmities, he must not defile it. He says with Isaiah: "I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips." He thinks of his youthfulness and of his inexperience, and says with Jeremiah: "Behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child." He fears that he shall not be able to speak acceptably, and says with Moses: "I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Such views naturally deter him; but the remedy, if he be called to preach, lies in divine grace and power. If it be needed, the seraph will fly with a live coal from the altar to touch his lips, and to purge away his iniquity; or the hand of the Lord shall be on his mouth, so that no man shall despise his youth; or God will give him friends and assistants that shall enable him to stand before Pharaoh. Sometimes, however, the difficulty lies in his relation to others.

His parents are old, and they need, as he fancies, their son at home. He says: "Suffer me first to bury my father." He has bought a yoke of oxen; he has entered a profession; he wishes first to devote himself to the acquisition of wealth; or, he has married a wife, and, therefore, he cannot come. Yet whatever may be the difficulties, and whatever may be the embarrassments, they are all known to him that makes the call. Jesus says: "Let the dead bury their dead. Follow thou me!" And if the heart be obedient, the way will be opened, parental happiness shall be secured, business may be disposed of, and the opposing wife may be converted.

If I may make a slight digression, however, and whisper a word confidentially, I would say: A young man who sees before him even the possibility of God's calling him to the ministry would do well not to marry a wife until he has fully entered upon his ministerial work. Above all, as a student, he should postpone the study of that department of natural science for a post-graduate course. To Adam, sole occupant of Eden as he was, God brought every animal to be named—and names in early days were derived from qualities—and thus as a bachelor Adam finished his studies, before Eve, the beautiful and attractive, was brought to his side. It is sad to say, and yet an extended observation warrants me in saying, that many a young man has dwarfed himself, and limited his usefulness, by a too early and hasty marriage.

If, then, a young man feels himself called to the ministry by a divine persuasion, what shall he do? I answer, Let him read and prepare himself thoroughly for the work of the ministry. Let him work in his sphere for his Master's cause. If he be a student, let him seek to influence his unconverted associates. If he be at home, let him lead his brothers and sisters, or most intimate friends, to Christ. If he find a Nathanael to whom his soul is joined, let him, like Philip, tell him of Jesus, and say, "Come and see." Let him not fancy that he will one day have great power in addressing multitudes, but that it is not his work to labor with individuals. This fancy of some day doing great things is a fearful illusion. (To do great things, we must learn to do little things well.) No man is fit to be the commanding general of an army who has not himself been drilled as a soldier. No man can win great power as a minister, until he has first met a brother's objections, solved a brother's difficulties, learned a brother's temptations, and witnessed how the word of God has delivered a brother's soul. Congregations are made up of individuals. Man by man, heart by heart, is the conquest won and the young man is best preparing for the ministry who learns how to deal with individual cases of sin and sorrow, of guilt and despondence.

Shall he tell his friends that he is called to the ministry? He need not. Shall he apply to the Church to be permitted to preach? shall he seek to

get into some pulpit to preach on some public occasion? By no means. The man who is anxious to go is never sent. If he has so little conception of the responsibilities of the ministerial office, or so little acquaintance with himself that he fancies himself equal to the work, it is a sign of such mental or moral disqualification as to unfit him for the ministry. The man truly called has no need to publish it. So long as God speaks to him privately, let him answer privately: "Here am I; send me."

The second evidence of a ministerial call is the voice of the Church. God has established correspondences throughout nature. There is the eye for sight, and the light and visible objects to correspond; there is the ear to hear, and the vibrating body and the undulating air. So the great Head of the Church, who calls the young man to preach, leads the Church to recognize that call. The influence which he puts in the heart thrills through the voice, sparkles from the eye, radiates from the countenance, and signals itself in the earnest wrestlings of the soul. The young man may fancy the matter is a secret with himself, and may hope that it shall never be known: yet as he walks the street some ministering brother, or some aged servant of God, will lay an affectionate hand on his shoulder, and say: "Has not God given you a greater work to do?" Or scarcely has the prayer-meeting ended, until some servant of God, possibly some elect old lady, will say to him: "Has not

God called you to preach?" Sometimes these questions come so suddenly, so unexpectedly, so unwelcomely, that the soul cries out: "Hast thou found me, O my enemy?" That which is discovered by one soon becomes manifest to all, and the Church, in whatever manner it may operate, opens for him a door-way leading into the ministry.

This call of the Church, added to the conscious call, greatly strengthens the conviction of duty. Many scriptural instances show us the beautiful correspondence of these voices. God called Bezaleel and Aholiab to work on his tabernacle, and filled them with the spirit of wisdom; but they were not authorized to commence the work until God informed Moses that he had called them. Joshua was called and anointed with the Holy Spirit to lead Israel, but the call was also revealed to Moses, and he laid his hands upon him. When God's voice of prophecy reached Samuel it was a new experience. He thought Eli called him; and the second and the third time he arose and ran. Then Eli perceived it was the Lord, and said to Samuel: "Answer, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth." Through Eli's voice Samuel learned God's call, and he doubted never after. God called Saul, and he sent Samuel to anoint him when he would have hidden himself among the people. He called David from the sheep-cot, but Samuel poured the anointing oil upon his head. The disciples generally were called audibly by Christ,

the Head of the Church ; but Paul received his message not only from the lips of Jesus, but through Ananias as well. Timothy received a gift from God, but his call was partly through the laying on of the hands of Paul and of the presbytery. There is not, I believe, an instance in the Holy Writ where a true man was at first ever anxious to bear a divine message. He always shrunk, hesitated, plead off, and trembled. Thus did Moses; so did the prophets. Jonah fled, and would not go to Nineveh until after he had been well *whaled.* So I have known young men leave their neighborhoods, their local Churches, their associations in the East. I have found them wandering on the Pacific slope. But scarcely had they reached their destination, and engaged in social prayer, until some friendly voice said: "Are you not a preacher?" or "Has not God called you?"

When the Church recognizes the young man he should openly and publicly prepare himself for the work, and, according to his opportunities, let him secure the utmost qualifications which he can acquire. Sometimes a strange intermingling of benevolence and self-esteem urges the young man onward, and he fancies the world will go down to ruin unless he springs at once to the rescue. My advice to such young men is, Get thoroughly ready. If you were going into the forest to fell trees, you would need a sharp instrument to do a good day's work. Be not in such a hurry to begin as to think the time thrown

away which is spent in grinding the ax. Is it not somewhat remarkable that Jesus never preached a sermon until he was thirty years of age? and yet the world was going to ruin! You reply: "Yes, but that was the age when the Jewish priest entered on his office, and Christ conformed himself to Jewish thought and practice." That is true; yet it is no less true that the great Head of the Church, for some wise purpose, ordained that the priest should not officiate until he was thirty years of age. I do not say that all should wait so long. Early and superior opportunities, unusual maturity of judgment, and the pressing needs of the Church, may indicate the duty of entering much earlier. No precise rule as to age, or as to extent of qualifications, is laid down in Scripture. The individual and the Church must decide in every case. In different Churches, and in different ages in the same Church, the standard has varied. The early Scottish ministers had but a limited training. Dr. South satirizes severely the Puritan preachers of his age, who, shut out of the universities, had few opportunities. The early Methodists felt obliged, on account of the urgent needs of their work, to thrust out young men with but little preparation. I believe the great West, with its rapid streams of immigration, had it been compelled to wait for trained ministers from the Eastern colleges and theological schools, would have been a hot-bed of iniquity, and a seething mass of corruption. But times

have changed. Congregations have been gathered; churches have been built; more ministers are knocking than can find room. God seems to say to the candidate, "Prepare to the utmost;" and to the Churches, "Put only picked men on guard."

There is a third evidence of a ministerial call. A man's own consciousness may be deceived; even the Church, composed of fallible men, may err. An infallible criterion is needed. When the Church has opened the way let the young minister go forward. As he speaks, exhorts, preaches, prays, visits the sick, and follows the outcast, he will find that the Spirit of God accompanies his labors. His heart will be softened into tenderness and gratitude when he finds that God speaks through his lips; the tears start from the eyes of his audience, their heads are bowed, their hearts affected, and their natures are changed. Under his preaching, as under the apostles of old, God gives to the people repentance and remission of sins. The souls thus saved are not only the trophies of divine grace, but they are also the seals of his ministry; they are epistles, read and known of all men; they are God's own attestation of a call to the work of the ministry, his own signature to his ministerial diploma. Where these three proofs combine—the voice of consciousness, the voice of the Church, and the attestation of God—no man need doubt. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

Let me illustrate one form of this call by my own experience, for occasional glimpses of that, I believe, you desire. Trained religiously, I had come to a young man's years before making a public profession of religion. Occasionally, prior to my conversion, thoughts of the ministry sometimes flashed across my mind; but it was only a flash. After my conversion I was earnest for the welfare of others, and worked in various ways to promote the interests of the Church and humanity. The conviction grew upon me that I must preach. I tried to put the thought away, because I feared I could never succeed. I saw the greatness of the work, and the reproach and poverty, the privation and suffering, connected with the itinerant ministry. Two especial difficulties were in my way: First, I had no gift of speech. All through my studies my fellow-students told me I could learn, but I could never be a speaker. In discussing professions they thought the law was out of the question for me, because I could never successfully plead a cause. My voice was poor. I had always shunned declamation whenever it was possible to avoid it. I had an unconquerable aversion to reciting other men's words; and whenever I attempted to declaim it was pronounced a failure. My associates believed, and I firmly believed, I could never make a speaker. So when I felt the conviction that I must preach the thought of the impossibility of preaching successfully made me question the

reality of the call. At my work and in my studies —for I spent three years in preparing for the profession of medicine—I was frequently in mental agony. I think I should have resolutely rejected the idea, only that it seemed indissolubly connected with my own salvation. I longed for some one who could tell me my duty. I fasted and prayed for divine direction, but I found no rest until reading in the Bible a passage seemed written especially for me: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." I accepted it, and resolved to do whatever God by his providence should indicate by opening the way. I never lisped to a friend the slightest intimation of my mental agony, but began to take a more earnest part in Church services. One Sabbath I felt a strong impression that I ought to speak to the people at night in prayer-meeting, as we had no preaching. But I said to myself: How shall I? my friends will think me foolish, for they know I cannot speak with interest. Especially I dreaded the opinion of an uncle, who had been to me as a father, and who had superintended my education. While I was discussing this matter with myself my uncle came into the room, and, after a moment's hesitancy, said to me: "Don't you think you could speak to the people to-night?" I was surprised and startled, and asked him if he thought I ought to. He said: "Yes; I

think you might do good." That night, by some strange coincidence, the house was crowded, and I made my first religious address to a public congregation. It was not written ; it was not very well premeditated ; it was the simple and earnest outgushing of a sincere and honest heart. I was soon pressed to preach, but evaded all conversation on the subject as far as possible.

My second difficulty was that my mother was a widow ; I was her only son, and the only child remaining at home. It seemed impossible to leave her. I feared it might almost break her heart to propose it. But as I saw the Church would probably call me, and as I had promised God to follow his openings, I one day, with great embarrassment, introduced the subject to my mother. After I had told her my mental struggles, and what I believed God required, I paused. I shall never forget how she turned to me with a smile on her countenance, and her eyes suffused with tears, as she said : " My son, I have been looking for this hour ever since you were born." She then told me how she and my dying father, who left me an infant, consecrated me to God, and prayed that if it were his will I might become a minister. And yet that mother had never dropped a word or intimation in my hearing that she ever desired me to be a preacher. She believed so fully in a divine call, that she thought it wrong to bias the youthful mind with even a suggestion, so much as

uttered in vocal prayer. That conversation settled my mind What a blessing is a sainted mother! I can even now feel her hand upon my head, and I can hear the intonations of her voice in prayer. I was requested shortly after to preach a trial sermon, but refused. The authorities of the Church said if I did not preach a trial sermon they could not tell whether I was qualified. I replied there was no order in the Discipline of our Church directing, or even permitting, such a sermon ; that I did not desire a license to preach ; but had only promised God to obey the order of the Church, should it license me ; and that I never should try to preach until I was so authorized. So I was licensed, not without grave deliberation and discussion, both as to whether I would ever make a preacher, or whether my health afforded any reasonable indication that I would ever be of service to the Church. I entered the pulpit immediately. Through divine mercy some souls were awakened and converted ; and, by the grace of God, I have continued to this day.

You perceive, young gentlemen, that I believe in the divine election of ministers. So far, you may count me a Calvinist. I believe, further, a man so elected should never turn aside to other employments while health continues, and while he has the approbation of the Church. Should health and strength give way, he may turn to other duties. Should he find he was mistaken as to his call, should the Church

find it was in error, and his services are not needed, he may be released. Better dig coal in the mines, or break stones on the road, than to stand in the pulpit uncalled of God and unapproved by the Church. But if approved, and if blessed in your labors, never turn aside. Let no dangers deter; let no temptations of wealth or honor, of office or fame, allure you from the ministry. I have known men so called to turn aside. But, in a long observation, I never knew one who turned aside for wealth, but who either became bankrupt, or made shipwreck of faith, before he died; or one who turned aside for office or ease, without going down under a cloud. You may be pressed, poverty may stare you in the face, but stand as "the beaten anvil to the stroke." Do your duty, and, verily, you shall be fed. God will care for you as long as a raven has wings, or a widow in the land has a "handful of meal in a barrel." Think of the early Christians, of the noble line of martyrs, and your sufferings will sink into insignificance. Look at the great Apostle of the Gentiles. See him persecuted, arrested, imprisoned. See his back bared to the lash. Five times he received forty stripes, save one I see him gathering his garments around his lacerated shoulders when he whispers, "None of these things move me." He is taken to the edge of yonder city, stoned, and left for dead. See him as friends gently raise him up and say, "Better abandon the Gospel; they will kill you if you preach." Yet, as soon as

breath returns, he utters, "None of these things move me." I see him yonder, drawn out of the water; he has been a day and night struggling in the deep; nature is overcome; he lies fainting on the beach, the water dripping from his hair; his friends say, "Surely he will never preach again;" but as the pulse beats once more, and strength returns, again I hear him say, "None of these things move me." He is on his way to Jerusalem; the prophets tell him he is to be bound and imprisoned; the people weep at the thought of seeing him no more; the elders of Ephesus come down to Miletus to meet him; he tells them he is going to Jerusalem, that he knows not what shall befall him there, save that the Spirit tells him in every place that bonds and imprisonment await him; but he grandly declares: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." Bonds and imprisonment did await him. He stood before Nero. He was condemned to die; and out of the dungeon of his prison he sends, through Timothy, the heroic and joyous message: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." Such a grand hero was the apostle, living and dying. One work he did, unmoved and immovable. And to us he speaks: "Follow me, as I have followed Christ."

LECTURE III.

THE PREACHER PERSONALLY.

"TAKE heed unto thyself," was the injunction of St. Paul to his beloved disciple, Timothy. If he needed such admonition, educated, trained, and in the active ministry, so do we. The work rises before us in grandeur; the voice of God calls us; but much depends on our devotion to the work.

The minister is unlike other teachers. They simply teach art or science, without reference to moral character. The printer may be an excellent mechanic, may teach his art thoroughly, and yet be a very bad man. The college professor may teach clearly the highest problems in calculus, and yet may be grossly immoral. But the minister is blended with the truth which he teaches. He may explain the doctrines of the Bible intellectually, but he cannot preach properly without a personal realization of the truth. I congratulate you, young gentlemen, on your devotion to this high and holy calling. I have spoken strongly and solemnly of the responsibility of the office, and of the divine call, that you might rest on secure foundations. Having done that, I rejoice that God has counted you worthy, putting

you into the ministry. Your work associates you with the purest and best minds of earth; with the men who have done, and are now doing, the greatest work in the purification and elevation of society.

For your greatest usefulness in it you need decision of character. You should feel that the whole course of your life is settled; that you have been taken out of the mass of men for one special duty. All your powers of body and spirit, your head, hands, and heart, should be consecrated to this one work. Your language should be, "This one thing I do." Where there is singleness of purpose there is usually great success. "If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light." Mr. Wesley once said of a young minister of only average talents and culture: "Other men *may* do good; this man *must* do good, for he thinks of nothing else." You will make but little progress if you look at the ministry as a stepping-stone to any thing else, or as a work in which you can spend part of your time and have a large margin for other duties. In his early ministry, before he had received the holy baptism, Dr. Chalmers wrote in reference to a chair of mathematics, that a minister could discharge all his duties on his charge, and have five days in the week for other pursuits. When he felt the greatness of the work, and his soul had fully entered into it, he publicly retracted his declaration, saying he had neglected to estimate

two magnitudes, "the littleness of time" and "the greatness of eternity." Do not think of being a preacher and something else. The powers of an archangel are too feeble for the conversion of the world. You should have a holy ambition to produce for the Master the greatest possible results; not merely for to-day, but for the entire period of your ministerial career.

The young minister is frequently perplexed to know what model he shall set before him. He admires some of his professors, or some leading men in the pulpit to whom he has listened, and in whose footsteps he desires to tread. To him they are heroes, and, unconsciously, he has an element of hero worship. But the selection of any model is a dangerous matter. No man is perfect, and we are much more likely to imitate defects than excellencies. We do well to follow glorious examples of holy living and of earnest devotion to the ministry; but imitation of manner, whether personal or professional, is decidedly injurious. God has not made two spears of grass precisely alike, much less two human beings. He has impressed individuality on our minds, as well as on our features. It is not his law to duplicate copies. Illustrious as your models may be, God does not desire exact copies. His wisdom is shown in using a vast variety of instruments, and in blending a vast variety of persons into the image of the one great Saviour. Avoid, then, all the desire for

imitation. Be yourselves. Consecrate yourselves, not imitations of others, to the service of Christ.

Your great aim should be to place before you the only true model, the Lord Jesus Christ. I suppose that you, as well as myself, have often wished for a description of Christ's person and of his appearance. Is it not remarkable that among the four evangelists there is not a single allusion to his height, or size, or temperament; to the color of his eyes or hair, the form of his features, or the intonation of his voice? Had there been such a record, what feelings of exultation would those have enjoyed who most resembled him; and what fears would have perplexed those unlike him as to their acceptance by him, and their power of doing good? Nor have we any description of the apostles, with the exception possibly of an allusion to St. Paul. We have their mental characteristics and their moral features; but not one hint as to their differences of countenance, temperament, strength, or voice. All this, as I understand it, is that we may copy no man. Our likeness to Christ should be mental and moral, and our imitation of him should be in always doing good. Is it not, also, a little singular that not one word is said about the particular dress of the disciples; or that not a direction should be given as to what color they should wear; or what the shape of their coats or cloaks should be? It is not even intimated that Peter's dress was different from that of the other disciples.

And is it not still more remarkable that, when Jesus sent out the disciples, he charged them not to provide "two coats," or, as Mark has it, they should "not put on two coats?" Is it not strange that they were not allowed to have one coat for traveling and for common wear, and another for the pulpit? Does it not seem as though they were to be perfectly like other men—to preach in the same garb in which they traveled, and to show themselves to be brothers of a common humanity? How much like the present successors of the apostles they must have been! Dismissing, then, from your thoughts all imitation of human models, take as your spiritual exemplar only the Lord Jesus Christ; and the apostles only so far as they were inspired, and as they perfectly followed him.

Your first duty, then, is to get such a conception of Christ, in all his glorious offices, as will enable you to present him vividly before the people. You must study the record of every utterance which he made, and every act which he performed. You must enter into the spirit of his compassion, his condescension, his diligence, and his love. To do this fully you will need the light of prophecy concentrated upon him, and a view of the circumstances of the people among whom he dwelt. You must study not only the history of Christ, the lessons taught, and the works performed; but you must study him personally, until you have taken into yourselves the impress of his char-

acter, the stamp of his own image. You must then translate all these into the circumstances of to-day. In your associations you will think, What would Christ have said? What would have been his spirit? Amid opposition you encounter, how would Christ have borne it? Amid work to be done, how would Christ have performed it? and so, in all your intermingling in society, you are to manifest the spirit of Christ. To manifest it successfully, you must have it; you must realize the full meaning of those words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." With this image of Christ in your mind and his Spirit in your heart, you will survey the work to be accomplished, bearing in mind that neither argument nor oratory of your own can save the people; and yet that the best powers of these which you can possibly gain may be wielded by the Holy Spirit for the salvation of men. Your one work must be to hold up Christ before the people, and so present him as you see him and realize his power, that the people shall see him through your life as well as through your representation. People judge not so much of truth in its abstract as in its embodied form. You may speak of the meekness and love of Christ, but you stand in Christ's stead before their eyes. They look for that meekness and love in you, and you dishonor your Master when you exhibit a spirit which differs from his. You must realize with the apostle, "For me to live is Christ." Your life must be hid in him, so that you shall, indeed, be "as

Christ" to the people. Thus "lifted up," he draws "all men unto him."

Paul said to Timothy, "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity." You stand before your congregations to show them how a Christian should live, how he should converse, how he should mingle in society, how gentle, patient, and loving he should be. If the fugleman, who stands before the undrilled soldiers to show them by his example what the word of command means, commits an error, his example is copied and the drill is imperfect. So are you to stand as fuglemen before your Churches. If your spirit is wrong, theirs will be, also.

That you may gain this high condition, daily reading of the holy Scriptures is essential. The soul needs them more than the body needs food. Jesus says: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Your object in thus reading should be not to gain matter for sermons, nor for the proof of favorite doctrines, nor for purposes of controversy, but to sustain your spiritual strength. You should discipline yourselves to read personally, not professionally. In his reading, the young minister is too liable to apply passages to those around him, and thus he fails to realize spiritual profit to himself. He is like the maiden lady, described by the humorist, that always cast glances on those around

her when she joined in the response: "Have mercy upon us miserable sinners."

So, also, it is essential to be a man of prayer. While the minister prays for his people, he must pray especially for himself. He must, indeed, bear upon his bosom, as did the old high-priest, the names or remembrance of his people. But, first of all, he must bring his own sacrifice to the altar. Successful ministers have always been men of prayer. You have read how Livingston and Calamy spent whole nights in prayer before their wonderful sermons. So, also, did Fletcher of Madeley. In this they copied the great Master. See Luther wrestling on the floor all night in agony of prayer at the Diet of Worms, and you will not be surprised at his triumphant answer next day, nor at his subsequent declaration: "*Bene orasse est bene studuisse.*"

Another element of success is faith, personal faith in the atoning merits of Christ—our only sacrifice and our only mediator. Through it we enjoy the consciousness of the forgiveness of sins, and the assurance of our acceptance with God. We also need that faith which accepts the Bible as God's word; that believes implicitly all his precepts and all his promises; that feels perfectly satisfied that God's word will have its corresponding fruit, and that Christ's presence every-where, and at all times, accompanies his minister, so that in the pulpit, at the bedside of the sick, and in all his duties,

he will have the assurance of an accompanying Saviour.

In ministerial deportment the utmost care must be used. Conversation should be genial and pleasant, and at the same time pure and instructive. Neatness should be cultivated without affectation, and cheerfulness without levity. We must beware of thinking ourselves better than others because we have different work to do, or of in any way separating ourselves from the society around us. We are God's embassadors, and yet servants. Christ identified himself with the common people. They "heard him gladly," and felt that he sympathized with their sorrows. Even the poor outcasts approached him, tremblingly and yet with hope. In the pulpit and everywhere we must manifest the spirit of the blessed Master, and be ready to extend a helping hand to the distressed.

To accomplish the most for humanity you must carefully guard your health and strength. No definite rules can be given to suit all circumstances. You must carefully watch the effect of your food, and eat chiefly what is plain and simple. You will have kind friends who will invite you to their hospitable homes and to their bountiful tables; they will urge you to partake freely, but let them not "kill you with kindness." Remember that the wise man says: "When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee: and put a knife to thy

throat, if thou be a man given to appetite. Be not desirous of his *dainties:* for they are *deceitful* meat." In addition to simple diet, let me caution you against late suppers. Mr. Wesley believed they produced nervous diseases, and earnestly cautioned his young preachers against both meat suppers and late suppers. My own observations have led me to the same opinion. Early in my ministry it was the common practice for those who preached at night to eat very little supper, frequently none at all, before preaching, and to eat a regular supper, or partake of refreshments, at nine or ten o'clock at night. I adopted a different course; ate at the regular hour, though sparingly, before preaching, and resolutely refused all food, except sometimes a cracker, after preaching. Nearly all of those who indulged suffered in the end, while my health improved. As there is no one law, however, which will suit all constitutions and all temperaments, each must be a law to himself. If his meals make him heavy and unfit for study, let him guard against a repetition; if, on the other hand, he has a feeling of buoyancy, and can study clearly and profitably, he has partaken well.

As in food, so in sleep. The same law will not suit all persons. As a rule, from six to eight hours are sufficient. Some are able to do with much less. John Owen, in his university life, slept but four hours, and Lord Brougham about the same. Napoleon allowed himself five hours; Mr. Wesley, about six, or

from six to seven. Each must determine for himself, guarding against unnecessary waste of time. When a student, I required seven hours. My custom was to retire at nine and rise at four. But every few days I found myself oversleeping my time some five or ten minutes, or more. I became fully satisfied that I required full seven hours, and that whatever moments I lost before I dropped asleep, or if I chanced to awake in the night, must in some way be made up. I had a fellow-student older than myself preparing for the ministry among the Covenanters, who scarcely ever retired before eleven, and was at his studies again between two and three in the morning. He was diligent and faithful; but it seemed to me that he never got wide-awake all day. The hours of rising will also vary. I was brought up in the old-fashioned way of rising early; but that, like many other old fashions, is at present considered by many as a relic of antiquity, if not of barbarism. I may be influenced by early associations, but my conviction is that the morning is the favorable time for study. An old proverb reads: "The morning hour has gold in its mouth." Protracted study at night I believe to be unfavorable to health. A slight fever or excitement rises in the system from the labors and anxieties of the day. The pulse becomes a little faster and fuller. Under this excitement the brain may act more rapidly, and one may compose for a time with more ease; but it makes a draft on the system, and, sooner or

later, will produce nervous prostration and severe disease.

Avoid all stimulants of every character, which may be recommended to strengthen your voice or to assist you in pulpit duties. I can scarcely suppose that any one who believes himself called to the ministry will countenance their use. Yet kind friends will sometimes suggest that you are weak, your nerves are tremulous, you have been out in the cold, you need a stimulant; and they will urge the taking of a little wine or brandy before preaching. These friends, if from England or Ireland, will tell you that the most distinguished ministers are in the habit of using them; and I regret to say that in many churches there both wine and brandy are kept in the vestry for the use of the minister both before and after preaching. On my first visit to the old countries the kind sextons seemed to be as much astonished that I would not accept them as I was amazed at their being offered. I have known some young ministers who used a few drops of paregoric, or a small quantity of opium, to give them temporary strength in the pulpit. I am glad to say that I have known but few such cases, but I must add that these were led in the end to either physical or moral ruin. Dr. Alexander says: "The instances of apostasy within our knowledge stare at us like the skeletons of lost travelers among the sands of our desert way." "The apparition of clerical drunkards, and the like, forewarn us."

Others limit themselves to two or three cups of strong coffee or tea. The effect of these stimulants is unquestionably to give greater strength to the system for the time; but all such artificial strength is a draft which must be repaid with interest. The unnatural excitement will be followed by subsequent depression. God does not require us to use artificial strength in the pulpit. We must give ourselves in our best vigor and culture to his service, but we should so give ourselves that the service of one hour shall not destroy our power for subsequent usefulness. I believe one reason why so many ministers complain of "blue Monday" is that they have keyed up their system by extra efforts beyond its natural tension, and the excitement passing away leaves them depressed.

So with tobacco. In some places congregations are unwilling to receive ministers who indulge in its use. Many families almost dread the visits of such ministers, lest their growing sons will be led to adopt a practice which they so earnestly discountenance and oppose. The least that can be said is, it is a costly mode of needless self-indulgence, and, as such, it stands in the way of a minister's usefulness. He pleads the missionary cause, and urges his congregation to economize; but his words fall powerless when they see that he does not love the cause of missions so much as to restrain his own self-indulgence. To many the odor of the cigar or of tobacco is unpleas-

ant, and especially in the sick room. There may be a few cases where persons are very phlegmatic and inclined to corpulency, where a small amount of tobacco may be of service medicinally. So, too, in certain stages of bronchial difficulty a temporary use may be of some relief; but for persons of nervous organization, as ministers usually are, it is an unmixed evil. It gives temporary tension, to produce ultimate relaxation. Not a few cases have I known of most promising and talented young men who have been by it hastened to an untimely grave. I suppose there is sometimes a relish and enjoyment connected with it, for I have seen men sit for an hour smoking, with their feet upon a table, and professing to be studying. I have no doubt they had visions of greatness and glory; but a somewhat extensive and prolonged observation shows that their lives usually end with their cigars—in smoke.

The young minister has but commenced his studies. He may have, indeed, graduated with honor both from the college and the theological school; yet he has only learned how to study; he has been acquiring habits; his great work lies before him. Too frequently, as the bent bow flies back, so, leaving the institution, he feels free from restraint. The clock does not call him; the professors are not waiting; recitations are not pressing; and he feels a luxury in being his own. He is in danger of losing his habits of study; for what is not done systematically

is oftentimes not done at all. To be successful, he must mark out a system for himself, must arrange his hours of study, and adhere to them as strictly as possible. With system adhered to, much can be done. Hannah More says: "A good packer will get in twice as much as a bungler." As far as practicable, the morning should be spent in study, and kept as free from interruption or intrusion as possible. Dr. Alexander says: "Tell me how you spend your forenoon in your early ministry, and I shall be better able to predict how you will preach. If you idle, stroll, or habitually visit before noon, your mental progress may be divined." It is difficult to say what number of hours should be thus devoted. I should be inclined to place the *minimum* at three hours, and the *maximum* at six. Mr. Wesley enjoined his preachers, wherever practicable, to spend all the morning in study, or at least five hours in the four and twenty. Many German students spend from twelve to sixteen hours in their study. Edward Calamy spent sixteen hours a day; and in preparing his commentary Poole occupied himself for ten years, rising at two or three in the morning, and studying till late in the afternoon, taking only a slight recess for a simple meal. A preacher, however, has such a variety of duties when in charge of a congregation as to render it improper for him to study more than five or six consecutive hours. Besides, the preacher has this advantage: he can be studying every-where.

Unlike men whose business is in the shop or counting-room, and is laid aside when leaving the place, the minister finds subjects of study wherever he goes. The families in which he visits, the social companies he attends, the men he encounters in business, and the children on the streets, furnish him matter for thought. He is God's messenger to benefit every one of them. Hence he studies their habits of life, their progress in knowledge, their aptitudes, besetments, and controlling influences. He searches for a key that shall open the wards of their hearts, for knowledge which shall instruct them, and for consolation which shall alleviate their sorrow. His business is more with men than with books.

If the poet could say, "The proper study of mankind is man," much more is it true as to the minister. Human nature spreads out before him. It is the staple on which he works. He must study the laws of mind, of the associations of thought, of the origin of emotions, the manner in which they strengthen or antagonize each other, and the influence which they exert upon the will. For this purpose he needs not only to read the best authors, and to study the best systems, but to study man for himself—especially to study his own congregation, that he may know how to apply to them the word of God.

To discharge his duties properly, he will need a zeal approaching enthusiasm; his whole being must

be absorbed in his work. The early apostles gave themselves "continually to the word of God and prayer." They labored night and day, publicly and privately, in season, out of season, warning even with tears those to whom they had access. Such must be the minister of to-day—a man of one work, who studies how to concentrate all possible power to produce one result. As the burning-glass concentrates the rays of light until they acquire a consuming power, so thoughts gathered from all sources, illustrations from all departments, motives of many kinds, all pass through his mind, and are focalized on one point—the destruction of sin and the substitution of holiness. It was said of the great Master: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." The prophet says: "His word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones."

The strongest element of power is love for humanity. Christ loved men so much that he gave himself to die for them. The true minister must also exhibit an intensity of love. When the sick came to Jesus he asked no questions as to race, parentage, or birth; no questions as to their conceptions of him, or whether their parents or friends were his friends. He simply healed them all; he showed them his kindness by his cleansing touch; and sparks of grace, coming from him, electrified their souls. So the minister must be doing good to those around him. They may dislike him and avoid him, but that does not diminish

his obligation to do them good. They may fly from him, but he is to follow them. Like the legend which represents Saint John as pursuing his former disciple into his haunts as a robber, and bringing him back again to society and purity, so must we follow with the spirit of love those who repel us, and would flee away.

The apostle had so much of this spirit that we hear him saying, "I will very gladly spend and be spent for you; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved." So intense was this affection that he exclaims, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." The same intense agony of spirit was manifested by Moses, when he prayed for the Israelites, saying: "Yet now, if thou wilt—forgive their sin: and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." That same spirit dwells in the bosom of earnest and successful ministers. "Give me souls, or I die!" has been the exclamation of many a devoted servant of God. This longing earnestness will manifest itself in the spirit of the minister, will be breathed into his sermons, and will actuate him in all his duties. Men will see that he is in the ministry, not simply as a profession for a livelihood, but that his mission is to save and bless humanity.

In his intercourse with society the preacher needs to avoid the spirit of dogmatism. The influences

connected with the pulpit naturally lead in this direction. The pulpit is "the throne of the preacher;" he utters his message authoritatively, and he is very liable to utter his own thoughts in the same manner. The attorney has his antagonistic counsel watching him every moment, replying to what he says, questioning his authorities, denying the correctness of his statements, showing the fallacy of his arguments, and the irrelevancy of his illustrations. He is compelled to be perpetually on his guard, and to expect opposition and contradiction. Attorneys treat this as a necessary incident in professional life; and, while highly excited this hour, they are genial and pleasant the next. But the minister, unused to contradiction or reply, thinks himself almost insulted if one calls in question the correctness of his views, or the accuracy of his statements. It would be a good thing for you if you could have some true friend who would carefully show you the weakness of your arguments, defects in your statements, or any errors, either in matter or manner, into which you may have fallen. Such a man would be your greatest friend, and yet how few are willing to receive kindly such admonition!

Sometimes a morbid sensitiveness, almost amounting to irritability and peevishness, impairs a minister's usefulness. This does not arise directly from his work; the spirit of the Gospel is one of patience and love. But this liability springs out of constitutional tendency. The minister is generally of an

active temperament, and frequently of fine taste and esthetic culture. His whole training develops nervous sensibility. Poets, sculptors, painters, and singers are proverbially irritable. Their cultivated sensibility, their accurate choice of colors, their perception of symmetry of form, their nice discrimination of musical tones and chords, all develop and stimulate their nervous power. What is incongruous annoys; a discord shocks; and musical connoisseurs are in terrible agony when others are enjoying a plain evening song. Every minister knows, or will know, the trouble that arises among singers, and the difficulty of keeping large choirs together. It is the result of their peculiarly sensitive organism. Preachers are liable to the same influences. They may not be either fine singers or renowned poets or painters, but they live in a realm of nervous excitement. They have a poetic outlook; they see pictures of beauty, images of grandeur, and conceptions of purity and glory. The realities of practical life, the hard knocks of the world, the discords of society, affect most uncomfortably such constitutions. But the minister should remember that he is sent to exhibit the beauty of a Christian life and the spirit of gentleness and patience in the midst of an agitated world.

One great source of a minister's annoyance is connected with his pecuniary support. In nine cases out of ten, this will be quite limited. He has been well educated, associated with respectable society,

has acquired a taste for neatness, admires the beautiful in painting, and feels the absolute necessity of books; but he has no fortune at his command. His salary, though oftentimes meager, is not promptly paid, and many a sad heart-ache comes from inability to meet pressing wants and demands. The true remedy can only be found in economy. In college life he studied political economy, but in ministerial life his studies will be protracted and severe in personal and domestic economy. An inflexible resolution should be formed never to go in debt. "Owe no man any thing," is an apostolic injunction. John Randolph is reported to have said in Congress: "I have found the philosopher's stone. It is, 'Pay as you go.'"

The young minister will need to guard against self-conceit. He may have been successful in preaching, and fancy he has already overcome all difficulties, and will take his place as one of the orators of the land. He has scarcely descended from the pulpit when some one is silly enough to tell him, and he is foolish enough to believe, that he has preached a fine sermon. He compares himself with some able and aged minister, and fancies that he is already more popular; and he lays aside his sermon with the conviction that it is as nearly perfect as a human performance can be, and that he has little more need for study or care, because his fame is already secure.

It cannot be denied that there is a tendency in

Churches to seek for young men rather than for the old; and I believe this is one of the great errors of Christian congregations. It is not so in other professions. The older a physician is, and the more cases he has successfully treated, the greater is the confidence felt in his opinion; and patients regard with doubt the visits of young physicians who come in the place of older ones. The attorney, as he grows in years, is supposed to increase in skill; and while clients are willing that the younger members of the firm shall collect testimony, and work up the case, they desire the counsel and advice of the senior member to guide them through its complications and intricacy. The statesman never grows too old to be appreciated and sought for. A Russell, a Brougham, and a Palmerston in England, and a Webster, Clay, and Benton in America, were leaders as long as they lived. To-day Gladstone, Disraeli, Bismarck, and Gortschakoff are the men who control, in great measure, the destinies of Europe. To an advanced age Thiers was the skillful and acknowledged leader in France. Why should it not be so in the ministry? And why is it that men turn, in the most important interests of life affecting themselves and their families, from the counsels of age and experience, to those of the young and less skilled? I may not be able to answer this question satisfactorily, either to you or myself. One reason, I believe, is the neglect of study on the part of many aged ministers. They

miss that stimulus which belongs to the other professions. To the physician every case is new; new investigations in pathology may change his views as to the nature of the disease; new remedies are discovered and recommended; he must keep abreast of the times, or some competitor will take away his practice. The attorney finds some new element in almost every case; new decisions are given by the Supreme Court, and he must study them. In statesmanship new complications are constantly arising; the connections of nations are so numerous, their interests are so wide, the matters involved are so various, and sometimes so vast, as to require the utmost comprehensiveness in grasp, and attention to the least *minutiæ* in detail. The statesman has no old sermon he can pick up and apply; he must think and study and write, and this keeps the mind ever active and fresh. Then he has around him a world finding fault. An eagle-eyed Gladstone is watching a Disraeli; an argus-eyed press is watching the movements of every administration. There is no time to nod or sleep. But the old minister sits down under his vine or fig-tree, and there is none to molest him or make him afraid. He hurls thunderbolts at the heads of scientists, who are a thousand miles away, and will never hear of his denunciations. He descants upon the sins of the Egyptians, who have been mummies for three thousand years; or upon the pride of Babylon or Nineveh, which have been

swept away by the flood of ages. He is pressed for time, and brings before his congregation of to-day a discussion he had made twenty years ago, on an issue then living, but now almost forgotten. His thoughts are of the past, his sermons are of the past, and the generation of to-day feels that he is scarcely one of them.

But, independently of this, society loves to be stirred or excited. Youth has greater power in arousing; it has more enthusiasm and zeal. Whether it be more earnest in heart or not, it exhibits greater earnestness. The eye sparkles more lively, the utterance is more rapid, the gesticulation more excited, and the whole frame more impassioned. There is no need of age losing its keenness of thought or its intense interest in the issues of to-day; there is no need that it should lose its earnestness of heart, though it may of manner. The latter, I suppose, is almost unavoidable.

I must not trench much on metaphysics; yet I may say, I suppose minds differ chiefly in two things: First, in the rapidity with which thought succeeds thought. I can fancy it quite possible that some men may think two or three times as fast as I can. In the images cast from the camera, you have sometimes seen how slowly a shadow may pass along the curtain, and then again how rapidly one chases another. It may be so across the field of mind. Where thoughts move most rapidly in succession, conclu-

sions are more rapidly reached; and if, as some philosophers fancy, the origin of the idea of duration is from the flow of thought, one man may seem to live longer in a month than another in a year. Now, in the same person, as the pulse beats more rapidly in youth and more slowly in age, so it is probably in the succession of thoughts. The second element in which minds differ, is in the number of thoughts which troop abreast across the field. I have no faith in the opinion sometimes advanced, that we can have only one idea in the mind at the same time. If we had but one idea, there would be no comparison and no reasoning; there would be no fancy, no imagination. Some minds may be exceedingly narrow. They are your severely logical minds. Their whole strength is spent in examining how one link of thought is fastened into another, and how strong and unbroken is the chain. The chief motion of their minds is in a line; and as the hound pursues the hare without looking to the right or left, so such men pursue an idea; and sometimes, when they catch it, they almost kill it. Still, they have their use. They are logical, severely logical, though the skeletons they form are so dry that one may well ask, "Can these dry bones live?"

Other minds, however, see a whole platoon of thoughts. Usually one advances sword in hand, like a captain, and the others are mere privates. Such men write floridly, or speak floridly; they deck with

jewels their favorite idea, and cover it with a profusion of ornaments. They are rich in illustrations, abundant in the metaphors; and sometimes so luxuriant that the main idea is hidden under the foliage, and escapes them utterly; then their speech or essay is point-no-point; you are bewildered, and cannot tell what is meant. Habit largely influences and controls us, but I think the ordinary law is that, without careful study and constant culture, not only is the succession of thoughts more sluggish in age, but the width of their platoon also diminishes. Age may think more correctly, but less ornamentally, and the common mind is pleased with illustrations, figures, and ornaments. Grander stores of knowledge and broader views of life are needed to compensate for the diminution of the power to charm and impress.

There is another reason why the young minister is sometimes preferred. The human mind has a love for noticing development or growth. We love the beauty of the morning as the light so sweetly spreads, deepening in intensity before the rising sun. From the clear sky we anticipate a bright and beautiful day. The noon hour brings with it the thought of declension—an unpleasant thought to the mind. We wander through the garden: the opening bud is more beautiful than the full-blown rose. There is the thought of beauty, with the added thought of increasing beauty; but with the full-blown rose comes the idea of decay. So, too, in realms of business. Men

prefer investing in growing towns rather than in older ones. They purchase corner lots, not because of their value to-day, but for what it is supposed they will be worth ten years hence. So it is with the ministry. Men love to hear the young minister, for they say, He preaches a fine sermon, and he will preach better by and by. They take stock in him, not because of what he is, but of what he will be. They admire his utterances, not merely because of what they are, but for the promise they give of coming oratory. So, because of this feeling, they prefer him to the man who is fully developed, and whose real value to-day may be much greater. But if that young man rests on his laurels, if he fails to study, if he preaches only the same sermons ten years afterward, the Church will feel woefully disappointed, and will regret its investment, because the anticipated rise is not realized. It may be illustrated by what we find in our own families. The little child just beginning to speak is an object of admiration and delight. The first time he says "Pa" or "Ma" distinctly the family is enraptured. When he is able to put a sentence together, though half the words may be misplaced, and the other half wrongly pronounced, they pat him on the head and clap their hands for joy. They call him a coming genius. But if ten years pass away, and he makes no improvement in his speech, it will not be on the *head* they will pat him.

While the young minister should be guarded

against self-conceit, he is also to be cautioned against discouragements. Eminence is not gained at once. The orators of to-day, like orators of old, struggle with difficulties. The preacher who seems to speak with ease and power has gained his position by long-continued effort. The work he does to-day is not of to-day. Sir Joshua Reynolds, it is said, was requested by a nobleman to paint for him a special picture. In a few weeks the order was filled, and a bill presented for five hundred guineas. The nobleman demurred at the price, and said it had cost the artist only the labor of a few days. Sir Joshua replied that he was mistaken; it had taken him forty years to paint it. So the sermon of to-day, or the work of to-day, though just planned or painted, is really the work of years of thorough culture. I presume there are but few young men who have not a sense of discouragement when they listen to the efforts of superior thinkers and orators. They should, however, remember, first, that quite possibly they may equal these orators at some future period, and their example should be a *stimulus;* secondly, that God gives but few such men to his Church, and that there is plenty of room for earnest workers, even if not so highly talented.

Let me speak again of myself. The only severe temptation I ever had to quit the active work of the ministry was during my first year. A church was finished on the circuit I traveled; an eminent mi-

ister was called to the dedication; he was a man of great mental power, an acute and original thinker, but of delicate health. For some years he had been trammeled with doubts and perplexities, partly owing to his state of health, and partly owing to Unitarian works which he had read, and which, for a time, weakened his power of asserting the divinity of Christ. But his health had improved, he had emerged from all these doubts into clear and strong faith, and he was enjoying a sacred influence of the Holy Spirit. During the services he preached five sermons, full of thought most forcibly expressed, and accompanied with a divine unction. I thought then I had never heard five such sermons. I still think I have heard but few equal to them. The effect upon me was one of humiliation and discouragement. I felt I had no right to stand in the sacred desk, and to utter my feeble thoughts like the lispings of childhood, when the services of such men could be secured. I resolved firmly to close my connection with the Conference at the end of the year. I did not dare to think of ceasing to preach; but I would be what Methodists term a local preacher. I would support myself by another profession, and preach whenever and wherever I could find a place to do good. I mentioned my purpose to but one friend, who had heard those sermons as well as myself, and who yet protested most emphatically, and even tearfully, against my decision. Before the year closed I had a

most interesting service. A minister, one year older than myself in the Conference, came to visit me, and I invited him to preach. My congregation was unusually large and intelligent, and I knew nothing of my brother's qualifications. Before he had proceeded far I discovered I had made a mistake. His thoughts were crude and disjointed, and he murdered the king's English. I was deeply mortified. I got my head down behind the pulpit, and as he proceeded it got lower and lower. I was chagrined and vexed, and said to myself, As long as the Church has room for such ministers, I will stay and preach on. It was the last temptation I ever had. Since I have been Bishop it has been my lot to give that minister an appointment. He has never excelled as a preacher. Though I have kept his name strictly to myself, I have never met him without feeling a glow of gratitude that, through his stumbling that evening, I was cured of my discouragement.

LECTURE IV.

INDIRECT PREPARATION FOR THE PULPIT.

EVERY work of importance demands proper preparation. As preaching is the most exalted duty which God has devolved upon man, it requires the most thorough qualification. Yet there are a few persons who claim that the minister is to speak without premeditation. They profess to obey the declaration of our Saviour to his disciples, "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." This direction, however, was given only to those who were delivered into the hands of governors and kings, to be scourged and punished for their faith. It was given, also, only to those who were miraculously endowed, and to whom Christ had given power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease. Hence, the direction is applicable only, in the present day, to such as can show similar power, or who are arrested and brought before magistrates for Christ's sake.

Those who plead for unpremeditated speaking

claim that they thus honor the Holy Spirit, and that they rely not on their own knowledge, or arguments, or eloquence, but on divine inspiration. I would not for one moment depreciate the offices and influences of the Holy Spirit, nor the promised presence of Christ with his disciples; but the work of preaching has an analogy to other works which God requires man to perform. The farmer prepares the ground, procures the desired seed, sows it properly, and carefully protects the growing crops, yet God alone gives the harvest. He has put life into the seed, and waters and warms it with the showers and sunlight of heaven. The physician, called to the bedside of suffering, carefully examines the character of the disease and its progress, and selects the best remedies within his knowledge; yet it is because God has so formed the human frame, and so disposed the qualities of the remedies, that health may be thus regained. God has given to the minister his word, as the sword of the Spirit; has given to him judgment and skill for its use, and sympathy for his congregation. The Holy Spirit shines upon them all, illumining the sacred page, guiding the judgment of the minister, and inclining the hearts of the congregation to hear and receive the truth. So that, though Paul may plant, and Apollos may water, God gives the increase.

Strictly speaking, extemporaneous preaching is impossible. A minister may select a text without having his thoughts specifically arranged, and may de-

pend upon his memory and imagination for the utterances he is about to make; but his power of speech he received in infancy; the words he employs he has used from childhood. If he quote Scripture, or refer to any incident within his experience or observation, he is using his memory. The extemporaneousness of the speech lies only in the order in which his thoughts are presented, or in such suggestions as at the moment may occur. The office of the Holy Spirit is thus defined by our Saviour: "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." When Christ sent forth his disciples to preach he gave them their sermon, commanding them, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." It was a short sermon, but it stirred the hearts of the Jewish world. His further directions were, to repreach the lessons they had heard from him: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the house-tops." And in the great commission he directed them to "teach all nations" "to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." He thus gave to his disciples the sum and substance of their preaching, which they were carefully to remember and faithfully to proclaim wherever they went. The apostle charges Timothy, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may

appear to all." And again: "If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words."

These preparations for the pulpit may be direct or indirect. The direct preparation applies to the arrangement of the sermon which may be immediately on hand. The indirect, to the accumulation of materials which shall be held in reserve, and ready for use whenever necessary. This indirect preparation will now be considered.

"Preach the word!" was the emphatic injunction uttered by St. Paul among his last words. And if preaching be the declaration of a message sent through us to our fellow-men, that word is the only thing which we should preach. We are informed that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Timothy is thus congratulated: "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus." That sublime passage of the psalmist commencing with "The word of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul," sets forth the value of the word in most beautiful language.

Jesus says: "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life."

That the minister may successfully preach this word he must study it diligently. He must not read it merely for his personal profit, (to which reference was made in a former lecture,) but that he may be able to explain it clearly to others, and draw from it such lessons as may be for their instruction and spiritual profit. For this purpose he must not only read it consecutively and thoroughly, but must so examine each separate book as to become fully imbued with the spirit of the writer, the age in which and the people for whom he more especially wrote, together with the attendant circumstances which add significance and force to the words. The relation of each part to the whole, and as embraced in the whole, should be so considered that the unity of the Scriptures may more fully appear. It is a unity extending through the ages. Made up of many parts, proceeding from the pens of many writers, it is yet so beautifully blended in its rays of various hues as to make one brilliant light to shine upon man's pathway from time to eternity.

For its clear elucidation, Scripture must be compared with Scripture, and the helps of critical writers, such as commentators, must also be used. Works illustrating the manners and customs of the people in the several ages, the historical connections between the Israelites and surrounding nations, and the geog-

raphy and topography of the Holy Land, will also be of immense service to the biblical student. I shall not detain you by alluding to specific authors, or by attempting a comparison of the relative value of these several studies. These matters pertain to your regular course, and are taught by your able and honored professors more fittingly than I could teach them. I would earnestly recommend, however, that your chief attention be given to the word itself, and to the illustration of Scripture by Scripture.

The Bible should be so studied that it shall be at the command of the preacher at all times. Whatever else he may know, or not know, he must, to be successful, have a ready knowledge of scriptural language. In it he will find the foundation for his best arguments, as well as his finest illustrations. Its poetry is beautiful, its imagery is sublime. Its great value is, that it is truth stated by the Lord himself in such form and manner as will best reach the human conscience. The preacher who quotes much of the Bible has, not only in the estimation of his hearers the authority of "Thus saith the Lord," but there is also a divine unseen power so joined to those words that they cannot be uttered without fruit. The words of men, however forcible and however beautiful they may be, are but words. But the words of the Lord revealed to man and for man have connected with them a divine power beyond the words themselves. How this is I may not be able to tell; but we have

illustrations throughout the Holy Scriptures. When the Israelites stood at the Red Sea there was no power in the words of Moses more than in ordinary words, yet because God directed him to utter them, the waters were parted and the dry land appeared. When Elisha, with the mantle of Elijah, smote the Jordan, the cloth was simply like other cloth; Elisha's arm was strong only as our arm, yet the smitten river opened a pathway, and Elisha went over. When Jesus spoke to the winds and the waves, I suppose there was nothing remarkable in his tone or manner, and yet the elements obeyed, for they felt the voice of God. You remember how the seventy came back after Jesus had sent them forth to preach, and informed him with joy that "even the devils are subject unto us through thy name." I suppose they were amazed when they found the words which they uttered accompanied, or followed, by such glorious results. It was because the words they spake were the words which Jesus gave them. So those words from your lips will be the power of God unto salvation.

You will find, also, that men the most eminent for usefulness have been the closest students of the divine word. Some of them knew but little else. Out of the Bible and his own experience Bunyan drew the wonderful story of the "Pilgrim's Progress," which has probably a hundred readers where the most eloquent sermon that the greatest uninspired

orator ever uttered has but one. We have South and Barrows, Howe and Goodwin, Calvin and Luther, Wesley and Edwards, in our libraries, and among our standard works, yet they are read and studied only by the few; but the words of the humble tinker are in almost every cottage, and they have brought comfort and peace to many a troubled soul. The secret is, he used God's word more than his own. One of the highest dignitaries in England is reported to have said, "The Bible and Shakspeare made me Archbishop of York." It is only by an intimate and ready knowledge of the Scriptures we can be "thoroughly furnished for all good works."

Let me caution you against underrating any portion of the Holy Scriptures. The Psalms are beautiful, the Gospels and Epistles are rich and instructive, but they are only parts of the word of God. Never allow yourself to speak or think disparagingly of the Old Testament. It is as much the word of God as the New. It would not have been revealed, but that God saw it was necessary for our humanity. Its necessity is not merely historical, prophetical, or explanatory; but there are rich veins of truth cropping out amid its local histories, and even its darkest narratives, like the veins of gold and silver amid the rugged quartz of the mountains, that will amply repay and enrich the devoted searcher. May I illustrate by an incident from my own reading and experience? I was a Bible reader from my childhood,

and I remember that very early I was surprised that so many evil things were written about the best men; that the portraits of some of them, though commanding as a whole, were drawn with exceedingly dark colors. There were even passages which, it seemed to me, might as well have been omitted. It did not seem to me that they added either to the glory of God or to the real instruction or edification of humanity. When I asked my teachers why they were there, I was answered: It was to show the truthfulness and impartiality of the divine writers; if they had drawn these characters without shadows, the portraits would not have been true; and their narratives would have been eulogies rather than histories. I supposed the explanation was the best which could be given, but it was not satisfactory. I could not help saying to myself, that had I written the life of Noah I would have omitted that so minutely described scene of his drunkenness and disgrace. Had I written the life of Judah, I should not have dwelt on his association with Tamar. Had I been writing a sketch of David, I should have passed more rapidly over the story of Bathsheba; and I would not have made so prominent the sins of Solomon. Then I was told that these incidents were related that the wonderful mercy of God might be exhibited, and that hope might be given to sinners in every age, when it was seen that, notwithstanding these vices and crimes, God pardoned and honored

his servants still. That view gave me more comfort, but not perfect satisfaction.

I was reading one day, when it occurred to me that nearly all these dreadful things were recorded of the ancestors of Christ; that Noah was not the only man who had used strong drink; nor Judah, nor David, nor Solomon, the only men who had gone astray. They were, after all, picked men; while around and beneath them was a mass of the degraded and corrupt. Those were passed by, while the faults of these men, ancestors of Christ, were carefully recorded. Then there opened before me what seemed a new range of thought. The Romanists have been trying to get the human nature of Christ as far away from our humanity as possible, and hence have taught the immaculate conception of Mary. Not so with the Scriptures. They show that on his human side Jesus was the descendant of ancestors no better than other men; that among these ancestors were those who had been guilty of every vice and crime possible to humanity; that the blood which from the human side coursed through his veins had come down for centuries through the vilest of the vile. Yet in that humanity he had dwelt; his presence made and kept it pure and holy. And that humanity, thus representing the whole race, he has exalted to the highest heavens. Then came to my heart the consoling thought, What if I have hereditary tendencies? what if my nature has been derived from

sinning ancestors? That Jesus who dwelt in a human frame eighteen hundred years ago can dwell in my humanity, and can make and keep it pure. Then I thought of his wonderful condescension, and I read with new light that passage: "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son in the likeness of *sinful flesh*, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." This view has seemed to bring the Saviour nearer to me than ever before. He is the Son of Man, and as such he not only knows our weaknesses, but as our great High-priest he is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." How logically and how beautifully the exhortation follows: "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

I must leave this for such limitations and cautions as the subject naturally suggests. I have used it merely as an illustration of how you may use the Bible for yourselves, and what comfort you may draw from even its apparently useless and darkest passages. The same thought leads me to Peter and Judas. I am not glad that any man ever did wrong; but I am glad that, since Peter cursed and swore and denied his Master, it is recorded of him; and that the awful betrayal of his Master, and his terrible end, are recorded of Judas. I am glad because if Peter, not-

withstanding his error, was recalled to his Master's favor, so may even I, if erring, be brought back and employed in my Master's service. The fact that the eleven apostles went forward boldly preaching, notwithstanding the wickedness of Judas, encourages us to go forward, notwithstanding a brother minister may have fallen by our side. I remember, when a young pastor, how some case of scandal distressed me exceedingly, and I feared lest the standing and influence of the Church might be destroyed. But when I remembered that one in twelve of the disciples whom Jesus had chosen committed such a terrible crime, and yet the Church stood, and in fifty days added three thousand converts, I felt there could be no danger of the Church being now overthrown by the folly or wickedness of one of its members.

I believe there is no part of the Scriptures which may not be made profitable to the Christian mind; that every single part of it was given for our edification. I have no sympathy whatever with that spirit which finds myths and mixtures in the word of God. I do not underrate true criticism. It is exceedingly important to determine the genuineness and authenticity of the text. I appreciate highly the labors of such scholars as Griesbach and Alford; but when they have determined for me what the true text is, I accept it in my heart of hearts as the word of God. Adopt no theory of inspiration which diminishes your reverence for the Bible as the expression of the

thoughts and will of the Almighty. By whomsoever he speaks, howsoever he speaks, whosesoever language, memory, and imagination he may have employed, the revelation is all his own. I heard Cardinal Manning once in London claim a superiority in this respect for Romanism over Protestantism. He said, in substance, that the Protestant clergy dissected the Bible, found a myth here and an interpolation there, and accepted only what seemed to them in accordance with their feeble reason. "But," said he, "show me a Catholic priest in the kingdom who shall dare to call in question the authority of a single text, and he shall not be a priest for six hours." The way some of the biblical critics discuss the Bible recalls to my mind a reported saying of President Grant. Some one mentioned to him that a certain Senator, who was charged with being egotistic, had not much faith in the Bible; his laconic reply was, "Why should he? he didn't write it."

The Bible has this great characteristic—no man is able to comprehend and embrace all its truth. Minds of different perception and structure see such parts of it as are specially applicable to their temperaments and their wants. It is studied to-day for chronology, to-morrow for history; now for its prophetic imagery, and then for its precious promises. But while no man can comprehend the whole, each can find what is amply sufficient for himself. It has something in it for men of all classes and for men of all conditions.

The preacher, like Ezra of old, reads in the book of the law, and gives the sense; he translates its orientalism into western phrase, its tense of the past into the present, and reveals to the audience not merely its words, but the influence it has exercised upon his own nature. He searches its pages to find something for every form of Christian experience, and to comfort some sorrowing heart with "Thus saith the Lord." It is a perpetual fountain, from which issues the water of life; it is an armory, from which the Christian soldier is equipped for combat. We are under orders—marching orders; we have received our instructions from the General-in-chief. Shall we not read every line, and study the meaning of every word? They are orders for ourselves personally, and orders for our congregations; orders for to-day, and orders for to-morrow. The more frequently they are read, the better they are understood, the more easily and perfectly they can be obeyed.

The New Testament is peculiarly rich in its precious promises, yet it is in great measure an expansion of the Old. The titles of Christ were given him in prophecy. His work was typified and his vicarious death foreshadowed in sacrifices. Every-where a line of illustration runs through the Old Testament which is more perfectly developed in the New, like the plant which thrusts its roots deep into the soil, but unfolds its blossoms in the sunshine and air. There are threads of gold running through the

entire warp, from the beginning to the end; there are clasps which bind together Genesis and Revelation.

Take the first verse in St. John's Gospel, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," and to me it points directly to the garden of Eden and the creation of the world. The beginning is the same. On our parents in Eden there came down a cloud of darkness, a pressing burden of wretchedness and woe. Eden's gates were to be closed, and cherubim were to guard the entrance. Into this thick darkness one ray of light pierced from the throne of God. In the dumb astonishment of all nature one word, one promise of hope, reached the human ear. That word was spoken to the serpent, but Eve heard it: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." Without that word, that promise of a Redeemer, earth had been without comfort, life without hope. That word Eve hid in her heart. When she drew to her bosom her first-born son, I fancy she thought that promised seed had come; and she called him Cain, for she said, "I have gotten a man from the Lord," or, as it is sometimes rendered, "*the* man from the Lord"—the One who was to bruise the serpent's head and re-open the gates of paradise. How sad her heart, when her hopes were disappointed, and his hands were stained with his

brother's blood! Child after child was born, children's children grew to maturity, generation after generation rose around her, but society grew worse, and no Redeemer came. For nine hundred and thirty years Adam looked and watched and waited, but no conquering Messiah appeared. Yet that promise of hope was handed down from generation to generation; it was God's word that a Deliverer should come. The ages rolled on. In the midst of prevailing darkness there came a ray of light to Enoch, and he prophesied, saying: "Behold, the Lord cometh." The earth was swept with water, and the nations waited century after century, the one great word of God standing as the only light for human faith and hope. The promise was repeated to Abraham and to the patriarchs; light shone on the mountain top of prophecy, and the glimpses were seen of a coming Saviour, whose voice whispered, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." To me this is the one word of life and hope that, while generations passed like grass, endured forever. It filled the mind of the apostle as he gazed on an incarnate Saviour, and exclaimed: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." This was the Word, the *Logos* alike of the Old Testament and of the New, promised in Eden, manifested in Bethlehem, announced by the angel of the Lord to the wondering shepherds as "good tidings of great

joy, which shall be to all people." Then follows that beautiful declaration : "Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude," not of angels, but "of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." As Miriam led the songs of the daughters of Israel at the triumphant passage of the Red Sea—more than eighty years old though she was—so it has seemed to me that Eve, the mother of us all, led the raptures of that heavenly host, as, after four thousand years of waiting, she saw in Bethlehem the appearance of the promised Redeemer. No marvel the burst of the song was "Glory to God in the highest!" and then, as memory glanced to the death of Abel, and all the wars and strifes of earth, it was added—"On earth peace, good-will toward men."

In the Book of Revelation, when the predicted victory has been accomplished, the Conqueror appears, and is called "Faithful and True." He had bruised the head of the serpent, and it was added—"He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood : and his name was called The Word of God."

I cannot help turning away, with a sense of relief, from the interpretation that makes the apostle that leaned on Jesus' breast seek among the philosophy of the Gnostics for that *Logos* or Word, the shadow of which they had learned from tradition, while the substance itself shone from the holy Scriptures in the promises made by the Father.

In addition to the study of the holy Scriptures, with all accompanying helps, we should have a clear and decided conviction as to the great doctrines of the Bible, and their relation each to the other. The student should examine carefully the views held by leading minds in reference to these doctrines; should compare them carefully and prayerfully with the holy Scriptures; and should adopt such views as he believes are clearly derived from the word of God. He should be so independent in thought as to examine for himself every creed, or confession, or system, and not to receive it simply on the authority of tradition, or of antiquity, or of leading minds. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the ultimate standard of reference. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." At the same time he should give due regard to the opinions of wise men, and weigh them carefully; he should regard as worthy of the most serious consideration the utterances of the Church through the various ages, and the systematized and formulated doctrines which have guided the Church amid hours of danger and darkness, and to which good men have clung with the conviction that they were the truth from God. The presumption is always in their favor, and they should not be set aside without the fullest investigation and the clearest conviction. Some young ministers there are with whom it seems to be proof suf-

ficient that doctrines are wrong because they were held by the Church in other ages. They are so filled with the thought of the progress of to-day that they fancy all that is old must be untrue. They feel themselves fitted for reformers; they are to renovate society and usher in a glorious age; their business is to reject all which society believes, and, under the claim of independence, strike out into new and unexplored paths. Such young men forget, or, rather, possibly they never knew, that the heresies which they intrude upon the Church are but the rubbish and drift-wood rejected by the master builders of old, and which have remained for centuries so worthless as to be forgotten. Under the boast of the new, they are simply championing the exploded of the old. In theology there can be no new doctrine, for the foundation is in the Bible alone. There may be new turns of thought, more fitting expressions, more pertinent illustrations, and even unperceived duties and meanings may be found in the sacred page, but the radical, fundamental doctrines are the same; they are like the blessed Saviour himself, "The same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Even the varying views in reference to doctrines have been so thoroughly discussed by the different schools of thought, that no unexplored territory is very likely to be found. Still, I would not repress investigation; I simply decline to leave the beaten turnpike, on which men have trodden for a thousand years, for a new

pathway which some explorer has marked out through the woods, until I am assured it is more direct, or better fitted for travel.

I have nothing to say as to the system of doctrines which you accept or believe, but I urge you to be men of conviction. Give yourselves no rest until you find the truth as revealed to you; then believe it, and believe it with all your hearts. Around these fundamental truths passages of Scripture will form, until, under the law of mental crystallization, they shall be as pure crystals, polished by no human hand, and reflecting the light of God. Unless you have firm convictions as to what the Scripture teaches, you are not fitted for leaders. Your trumpet should give no uncertain sound; you should know of the doctrines, whether they be of God. It is not your office to stand in the pulpit and express doubts. If you have any, let them be cleared away before you speak; for you come to bear, not a message of doubts, but a message from the Lord. Christ, your great model, spake as one having authority, and not as the scribes. Christ never uttered a doubt in his teaching: it was positive in its character. The disciples never uttered doubt, but spake the word of the Lord with all boldness. You owe this to your congregations, who look to you for instruction and guidance. You owe it to yourselves, for without it your power will be frittered away. Men of force say, "We believe, and therefore speak." Whoever reads

the epistles with care will notice their strong, positive utterances. Where there is doubt there is dimness and hesitation, sharp lines of definition are lacking, and clear presentation is unknown. Men talk around and around a subject without piercing directly to its essence and marrow.

Among the doctrines which should be presented most clearly and strongly, and on which the young minister should be thoroughly prepared, I name, first, the divinity of Christ. I pass by any remarks on the being or attributes of God. These are so clearly stated, so fully believed by people generally, as to be considered universally accepted. Here and there an erratic being may arise who doubts or denies. Occasional sermons may be preached on such topics, but I believe the head is seldom at fault so much as the heart. If it be true that with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, I believe it is also true that out of the heart proceed all evil thoughts, among which infidelity and atheism are occasionally found.

The divinity of Christ is, as I believe, the *articulus stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ,* rather than that of justification. The latter has its foundation in the former; and in Luther's time the former was scarcely called in question. The history of the Church in all ages shows that the men who reformed the world drew their power from the inspiration of this doctrine. No Church has ever conquered the heathenism of the world, or carried its light permanently into the dark

places of the earth, or has been distinguished for bringing back the prodigal, or saving the outcasts, but by the exaltation of the cross of the divine Saviour. It was on this confession of his divinity, that he promised that his Church should stand. When he asked his disciples their opinion as to his character, and when Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," the reply was made, "Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He had taught his disciples to call no man master, yet he said to them, "Ye call me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am." The true Church ever stands in the same attitude, and looks up to Christ as its divine Lord and Master. I do not say that you must preach this controversially, but preach it prominently; assume it and declare it as it is taught in the holy Scripture. I do not advise you to spend your time upon questions of subtilty. There are mysteries in the mode of the divine existence beyond the reach of our conceptions; for the infinite cannot be measured or fathomed by the finite. How it may be with others I cannot say, but on this subject analogies, illustrations, and reasoning have never afforded me full satisfaction. I could meet objectors with them; I could silence cavilers; but I rest solely on the word of God as the foundation of my faith.

The depravity of the human heart, the inherited tendency to go wrong, are so fully shown, by both

observation and experience, that it would seem as though there ought to be no difference of opinion as to the fact. I think all men every-where have pretty fully believed that in *other* men the human heart is "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." There may be differences in speculation as to how that depravity comes, to what extent it reaches, and how it may be removed; but unless man *is* so depraved he needs no Saviour. But if that depravity inheres in his very nature he needs a divine Saviour who can create him anew. To man thus sunk in guilt, the doctrine is preached of an atoning Saviour who died in his stead, who magnified the law and made it honorable, and who made it possible for God to "be just, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." These are to me the cardinal doctrines of the Gospel—a divine Saviour making an atonement for sinful man, and thereby restoring him to the divine favor. On these doctrines, and their collaterals, every young minister should gather such Scripture proofs and arguments and illustrations as shall make his Gospel glad tidings to the sons of men.

I am aware that among many there is an aversion to doctrinal preaching; but the injunction of the apostle to Timothy was: "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." Again: "Reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doc-

trine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." The disposition to avoid the examination and the preaching of doctrine almost inevitably leads to fables, and foolish and unlearned questions. By studying doctrines carefully, however, I do not mean that they should be set forth in a controversial manner, but be taught as the teacher would instruct his class in algebra or geometry, giving them positive views, as though no others had ever been taught.

Prominent, also, among these teachings must be the influences of the Holy Spirit. Through its influence alone all good begins in man. It is the agent of our awakening, justification, and sanctification; and without its precious influence there could be no hope and no life for our world. The doctrines of the immortality of the soul, of the resurrection of the body, and of future rewards and punishment, should also be distinctly set forth, and given such prominence as we are taught in the Holy Scriptures.

The study of Church history should, also, claim a minister's attention. I wish there was some work on this subject which gave the true life of the Church, and was not so much occupied with discussions as to heresy and orthodoxy, and the lives of a few of the leaders. Published sermons may, also, be highly serv-

iceable, that the young minister may gain a view of the matter and manner which distinguished those ministers who have been most successful and useful. He should read them, not to copy or imitate, but to find suggestions and inspiration, which may add to the breadth of his views and to the facility with which he may perform his work. I should recommend, however, that the reading be confined to the sermons of the great masters.

These materials thus collected should be thoroughly digested; they should be transformed and transmuted into one's own current of thought. In this way the individual's performance will be original in its character and in its structure, and will be enriched with thoughts and illustrations of beauty and grandeur which shall give to it a higher character and greater force. This will not be plagiarism, for it is not the simple use or quotation of another man's work, but, like the stream whose volume is swollen by every little rill, it will hurry onward in its own channel, making its own music as it flows. We coin few new words. The greatest inventors create no materials; they simply place in new relations what have been already known.

Various plans are pursued in collecting and preserving materials. The use of scrap-books and commonplace-books cannot be too earnestly commended for preserving such items as may come under your notice, and for which you may have need of ready

reference. In reading, it is well to have a pencil in hand and a note-book convenient, not only for the sake of quotations or for marks of reference, but. what is still more valuable, to preserve the thoughts which are suggested to your own minds rather than stated by the author.

As an element of preparation the pen should be freely used. I speak not now of the question of written or extemporaneous sermons, but of that facility in writing which a minister should possess. This habit is absolutely essential. You should write much, and strive to write well; yet, first, write much. All nature is luxuriant in infancy. What an immense number of leaves crowd each other and fall away! What a profusion of buds and flowers—ten times more than any tree can develop in fruit! So it is with the young writer—write first, trim afterward; pour out your thoughts as they occur, even should their order not be the most harmonious or the connection the most perfect. The more rapidly you write, the more naturally. The great difficulty with many is that their ideal is so high, their standard so perfect, that they fear to write at all. They commence, and are discouraged. While correcting one sentence they lose the glow which would have given warmth and beauty to the next. Write much, if you only write letters or articles for the daily or weekly press. Write frequently on theological topics, and occasionally write sermons—whether you deliver

them or not—for the purpose of securing suitable form and length, and the proper relation of the various parts.

The studies of a minister should not be confined exclusively to theological reading. He should, as opportunity serves, make himself master, as far as may be, of the general principles of every valuable science, especially of mental philosophy. He should also love to roam throughout nature. Every-where there are marks of his Father's hand. The rocks of the earth, the plants and animals of its surface, the currents of the sea and of the air, and the great globes that move through space—all display the wisdom and power of the great Creator. The minute as well as the vast may furnish lessons of value, and illustrations which will both interest and profit. A minister should, as far as practicable, intermeddle with all wisdom, yet so as ever to keep Christ as the great central figure. He should also keep in view the work which he is performing—the erection of a great spiritual edifice. All subsidiary knowledge is but as the scaffolding.

The range of knowledge is so wide, the wants of congregations so varied, and the current of public opinion so changeable, that every department of literature and science may become tributary to the preacher's influence. In my childhood and youth I had a constant passion for study. To some extent I examined the chief languages of western Europe.

It was with me a simple curiosity; but I have since found that every branch of study has come to my aid. It has been my lot to hold conferences or ministerial meetings in all those countries whose languages I had studied. I was not able to talk to any extent in those languages, but I read them, and could soon understand the deliberations of my brethren.

In keeping abreast of the day it is not best to spend too much time on the daily press or the lighter class of magazines. It is one of the triumphs of Christian civilization that we can have news at our breakfast-table from all parts of the globe; but the daily press is not of itself an unmixed benefit—it tempts the student to dissipation of thought, and oftentimes his morning hours wear rapidly away while he is reading matters which interest him, but which are not essential to his important work. Like the bee, he should know how in a few moments to extract the honey from the flower, and then fly on, without stopping to count the number of the petals, or to dwell on the beauty of the coloring. He should be like the business man who rapidly glances over the most important items, and then confines himself to the duties of his counting-room or office. In scientific and theological reviews there are frequently articles of great value, which the preacher cannot too carefully read and ponder; but while he is interested in the lighter reviews, and pleased with the style and structure of articles, he is very liable thus to spend his moments,

which ought to be devoted to more solid reading or to pastoral duties.

Still, it is difficult to fix any precise rule on this subject. The times breathe a free spirit. A wide range of topics is discussed in the daily press. Among the masses there are minds stirred with thoughts of great value. The preacher must not unfrequently grapple with specious forms of error which are prevalent among the people; he must understand the arguments which are employed to sustain them, and which captivate so many. The more thoroughly people find him posted in matters of interest to them, the greater will be his influence over them; yet that influence will be of little value unless it helps him to draw them to the Saviour.

The subjects for preaching cover an immense realm, and only a glance can be cast over them. Negatively, the object of the pulpit is not simply to teach or enforce morality from any heathen or natural stand-point; it will teach a high and pure morality, but it will present it as the issues from a heart changed and purified, and filled with love to God and man. Morality that springs not from the heart is like a tree from which the limbs that bear bad fruit are pruned and cast away. Christian morality is the life of a young tree, permeating every limb and twig, and producing beautiful flowers and healthy fruit. The tree itself must be changed in its nature. "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can

a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit." Nor is the object of preaching the correction of mind by the explanation of its laws. No amount of knowledge of metaphysics can change the human heart. The knowledge of machinery will not correct its errors or set it in motion. Nor is the great theme of the ministry to be natural religion. Motives of value and power may be drawn from nature. Men may be taught the influence and results of their actions ; but neither these nor the voice of nature have power to change the currents of the human soul. Much less should the minister preach himself. The pulpit is the place for the Master. The teacher utters divine thoughts, and he who brings himself, in the form of supposed argument, oratory, or rhetoric, for personal exhibition, degrades and pollutes the sacred desk. Luther said : " I myself know nothing of Luther, will know nothing of him. I preach nothing of him, only Christ. The devil may take Luther, (if he can.) If he leave Christ in place, it will be well with us, too."

The great question for the pulpit to ask is that propounded by the Master himself, " What think ye of Christ?" and the answer which it gives to the world, which still echoes the question, must be a clear exposition, not only of his character, but of that character as manifested in the salvation of men. When John sent to ask questions concerning Christ, instead of answering them directly, he appealed only to his

wonderful works, which proved him to be the Son of God.

The minister should grapple with great themes, and not occupy the time of the people with trivial subjects. The interests of eternity may, to some individuals, rest on the issue of a single sermon; and in some form, directly or indirectly, every sermon should lead to Christ. With what wonderful topics is the pulpit permitted to deal! The character of God, in his omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence; the responsibilities of man as a creature of God, formed by his divine hand, bearing the impress of his glorious image, breathing of his own breath, the object of a Saviour's death, the possible Son of God and joint heir with Jesus Christ, who is the Creator and Lord of all; his responsibility, as shown in his domestic and social relations, in the leadership of thought, the investigation of science, and the government of the world;—then, too, his glorious destiny; his conflict with and triumph over death and the grave; the resurrection of the body, strange and incomprehensible as it may be, and an immortality coeval with the duration of God himself;—then, too, the thought, that his destiny is in his own hands; that, accepting Christ and obeying the divine law, he may dwell beside the throne of God himself, but that, rejecting Christ and the offers of mercy, he "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;"—

these are topics of immense moment, and which interest every hearer. How pitiable it is to hear leaders of thought say that they cannot tell whence they came nor whither they are going; that life, in its origin and its end, is wholly involved in mystery, and that eternity has no voice which has reached the sons of time.

Springing out of these great questions is the whole circle of human duty. All men are our brothers, because we are the offspring of a common Father. We cannot deny or ignore that common brotherhood, or shrink from its duties, without grieving the Father of us all.

Not only must the various topics of preaching be carefully studied and selected, but the relation of these parts each to the other is a matter of no small moment. The law of God, in its great and solemn injunctions, should be distinctly set forth. Our congregations should be gathered as around the base of Mount Sinai, while from its summit is heard the voice of God in those commandments which are unalterable and eternal in their character. The effect of these utterances will be, that consciences will be awakened and hearts will tremble. Some will say, with Moses, "I do exceedingly fear and quake," when they behold the majesty of the law, the purity of God, and their own impurity. Others may be repelled, and will say, "Let not God speak to us any more." Some will object to the sternness of the law, and will say,

"Prophesy smooth things;" but still that law must be preached. It brings the sinner to a recognition of his sins in having transgressed God's holy law, and shows him the fearfulness of the doom which is impending over him. The law must be followed by the Gospel; the awakened sinner must be pointed to the Saviour, that he may see and feel that, deep as are the stains of his transgressions, the blood of Christ can wash them all away. There are many preachers who love to dwell on the Gospel alone. They talk sweetly and beautifully of the fatherhood of God. This is well. It is more than well, it is essential. But sometimes they go beyond this, and declaim against the preaching of the law—intimate that it belongs to a past age, a less civilized society; that men can best be moved by love alone, and they rely wholly on its attractive power. Such a Gospel may rear a beautiful structure; but its foundation is on the sand. No true edifice can be raised without its foundations being dug deep by repentance toward God, and then shall the rock be reached, and the building shall be through faith in Jesus Christ. The law without Gospel is dark and hopeless; the Gospel without law is inefficient and powerless. The one leads to servitude, the other to antinomianism. The two combined produce "charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned."

LECTURE V.

THE PREPARATION OF A SERMON.

IN the preparation of a sermon the preacher is brought face to face with his life-work. In a few days the Sabbath will call him to the pulpit—but what shall he preach? The question seems to stare at him from every book which he reads, and to meet him wherever he goes. If he has not yet formed an acquaintance with his congregation, it is not strange that he should be at a loss what subject to select. There are, however, general subjects which can never be out of place. Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; the duties of prayer and holy living; the rewards of the righteous and the fearful forebodings of the impenitent, are topics which may be presented to any audience. But if the minister has formed the acquaintance of his congregation, out of its peculiar wants and circumstances topics will naturally be suggested.

If a man is in earnest in his work, if he fully perceives the danger of many in his congregation—the talents which are unemployed, the vices prevalent in the community, the fascinations and allurements which influence the young, the living issues which

press on the community around him—his head and heart will be so full that the question will not be so much, what can he have to say, as which, of the many topics, shall be first presented. Just at this point is found the clear distinction between the true minister, whose heart is yearning for his people, and who longs to preach to them the word of life, and the one who simply fills the pulpit because the time has arrived, and he must somehow address his congregation. I would not apply the old adage, "When you have nothing to say, say nothing," for it is important that the regular services be held—that the people sing and pray and worship before the Lord; but I would advise that under such circumstances the service should be both simple and brief. Yet it so happens that ministers who have nothing to say usually take a long time in saying it.

If your object be simply to preach a sermon because you have an appointment; if God has not given you any message, and you merely wish to read a beautiful essay, so that men shall say, "What a fine preacher!" or if you have talents for oratory that you wish to display, then the easiest way to get the sermon is to borrow it from some kind brother. It will save you a great deal of trouble, and accomplish just as much good. If you cannot borrow one from a neighbor, then you can buy one. They manufacture them in England by the quantity, and sell them at ninepence apiece. I do not know whether any

Yankee house has yet had sufficient enterprise to engage in this department of business. If you can neither borrow nor buy, then Paley comes to your help by suggesting—"If you have to preach every Sunday, make one sermon and steal five." This stealing business, however, is not always safe. Sermon thieves, like other thieves, are sometimes caught, and are obliged to stand in a pillory. I saw an incident lately reported of a young man who preached a trial sermon. When the council was called, and his effort was pronounced to be good, a minister rose, evidently burdened, and informed the council that the sermon was not the young man's own; that he had it in his library, in a rare book, and he did not know that there was another copy in America. The young man was called in to be questioned by this minister. When asked if it was his own, he frankly said, "No;" that he had heard that minister preach it some time before; admiring it greatly, and not having time to prepare, he had concluded to preach it over. Report does not tell us what they did with the young man, but the old one asked no more questions. Seriously, however, we have falsehood and fraud and embezzlement enough in the world, without ministers entering into it; and the morality of the congregation can scarcely be expected to be very high, or the people to observe the laws of *meum et tuum*, where a minister steals his Sunday sermons, and prays God's blessing upon them.

Is it, then, lawful ever to preach other men's sermons? I think it is occasionally; but the fact must be stated. The minister may say, "I have found among Calvin's sermons," or Wesley's, or Robertson's, or Spurgeon's, "one so suitable to our circumstances, and so directly applicable, that I wish to read it to-day." His congregation will, very probably, admire and approve his choice. Or, what possibly is better, let him present his own views in part, and then adopt, for the remainder of his sermon, the words of some influential author, giving due credit and notice of what he has done. In this way the occasional use of other's sermons may be not only without injury, but of much benefit.

It may be a little digression, but my advice is, that a young minister should never talk to his friends or his congregation about being at a loss for a subject, or not knowing what to preach. They will instinctively feel that he has no divine message for them; that he is rather thinking of what kind of an effort he can make, and how he can succeed. There may be times when two subjects press upon him, and he doubts which of them would best suit his congregation in its peculiar circumstances. If he has a brother minister or an intelligent friend acquainted with the condition of the congregation, and in whose judgment he can confide, it may be right and proper to ask him. Especially may this be the case in visiting a strange congregation. Otherwise, the less

conversation about the topic, or the sermon, before its delivery, the better. If the message comes from God, if he feels himself under divine guidance, let him find in careful study of the circumstances, and in the light which comes to him in earnest prayer, the answer which he needs. I once knew an aged minister, a man of great faith and pulpit power, who would never before preaching speak about his subject. He said, if he never mentioned it Satan would not know it, and would not be prepared to counteract its influence; but if he spoke of it, Satan might hear of it and destroy its power. This was over-sensitiveness; yet I admired his earnestness of spirit, and his simple desire to do the utmost possible good.

So, after your sermon, court no expressions respecting it. If you are naturally sensitive as to its reception, conversation will increase that sensitiveness. Having delivered your message, leave it with the people and with God. If you make it a subject of conversation people will think you wish compliments, and they will fancy you care more for your reputation than for their souls. Apologies beforehand, and suggestions of not enjoying the sermon afterward, have usually their roots in supreme selfishness.

Decide what end you propose to reach by the sermon. Is it for the impenitent, for the inquirer, or for the edification of believers? Is it to enforce some pressing duty, to guard against some

danger, or to afford comfort and hope to the suffering and sorrowing? According to the object proposed, let the text be selected. It may be, however, that in your reading, or meditation, or pastoral work, some text has occurred with such peculiar force that you have no difficulty in a selection. In a few cases, both in my personal experience and in the selection for sermons, a passage of Scripture has occurred with such force to my mind that it seemed to stand out from the page in a clearer light and in bolder type, so that I seemed to see nothing but it. At other times a text has suddenly slipped into my mind while walking on the street, or engaged in other duties, and has come back to me with such frequency and with such power that it supplanted all other trains of thought. As a rule, in preaching from such texts I have enjoyed most light, and have seen most immediate results.

Let me guard you against the selection of words of Scripture wrested from their true significance, or such passages as, having a purely literal meaning, are used for allegory, or as containing deep spiritual signification. I knew a minister who selected the word "One," and preached from it a sermon on one God, one faith, one baptism, one heaven, and one hell. He said many good things, but he did not give the sense of the passage or the mind of the Spirit. Another preached on "Six steps to the throne;" another on "There appeared a great wonder in heav-

en ; a woman." I once heard of a man, very illiterate, who fixed on the passage of bringing into the Church "damnable heresies." Mispronouncing the word, he announced for his text, "damnable hearsays ;" and proceeded to give a very proper reproof to the gossip and slanderous stories of the day, which after examination turned out to be only "hearsays." He got nearer the fact, in truth, than do many of these fanciful speakers.

The true rule is, Consider as near as possible what God intended in revealing that portion of his word, and then you will be in a line with the thoughts of God. Closely connected with this selection of texts is the selection of topics. These ought always to be of commanding interest, and such as apostles and prophets, and especially our blessed Saviour, brought to the attention of the Church. You should discourage that sensational preaching which, while it excites the curiosity and fancy, is of no permanent value. There is a class of preachers who always advertise their topics, and who very generally endeavor to draw some persons by the quaintness or eccentricity of their titles. One announces his subject, "The value of backbone," another, "The girl of the period." I knew one minister who occasionally preached the "Devil's funeral." Another announced "Words that were spoken by neither God, man, nor devil ;" and when his wondering congregation came his words were the utterances of Balaam's

ass—and not very inappropriate either. Only the other day I noticed an advertisement for a sermon on "How Jonah lost his umbrella." It was on the gourd vine that shaded him. At what an infinite distance is such trifling from the examples of the blessed Saviour and his apostles! and how must it weaken the confidence of congregations in the declarations of a minister that he has a message for them from God!

If the young minister is apprehensive that he may run out of subjects suitable to the pulpit, I would recommend him to keep a note-book specially for texts and subjects. First, let him write down in his daily reading of the Bible such passages as occur to him as suitable for sermons that would be profitable to his congregation. He will find some of these almost every day. In hearing sermons, or in visiting the sick, or in casual reading or conversation, such texts will also occur which should be added to the list. Secondly, let him enter in another list such topics as present themselves, as specific duties, doctrines, or scriptural characters for imitation or warning. He will thus have two reserve lists to which he can at any time refer. I found this plan to be of much service to myself, though sometimes, for months together, I did not need the references, as many subjects of interest came to me in the midst of my daily duties, which demanded immediate attention. But occasionally I referred to these lists, and

selected from them such texts or topics as I believed might be most profitable.

The question then arises: "How long should the sermon be?" No definite rule can be given. The old Scotch ministers and the Puritans on communion occasions held services from early in the morning until the going down of the sun, with but a slight intermission for the noon meal. The sermon was frequently, at least, two hours long. St. Ambrose, it is said, spoke about half an hour. The Saviour's Sermon on the Mount, as we have it on record, is not very long, and yet it has revolutionized the world. How long St. Paul preached we do not know, but we find at Troas he spake until midnight; and then, after an interval to bring back to life the young man who had fallen from the window, and to break bread, he continued his speech until daylight. I have known the opening prayer and the explanation of the psalm which was to be sung, occupy, among the Covenanters of this country, a full hour and a half before the sermon commenced. In ritualistic churches the sermon is crowded into a small space, as comparatively unimportant. The Abbe Mulois, one of the most recent and able of the French writers on preaching, suggests seven minutes as being the most approved length for sermons in that country. I, however, listened to Cardinal Manning, in England, for nearly an hour.

The average length of Protestant sermons may be

stated at from thirty minutes to an hour sometimes being less than thirty minutes, and sometimes, on special occasions, more than an hour. The length of the sermon will vary properly with the grandeur of the theme, the necessity for a thorough explanation or illustration, and the circumstances of the congregation. The tendency with writers of sermons, especially if they must prepare two or three new sermons a week, is to make them very short. The tendency with extemporaneous speakers is to lengthen them out almost indefinitely, especially when they find themselves in a fog. The result will be what the old Scotch parson said when he had preached a sermon three hours long: "Were you not tired?" said his friend. "Nae, nae," said the parson; "but it would hae done your soul gude to have seen how tired the people were." The only safe rule is, to quit before taxing the attention and patience of the congregation so that they will be unwilling to return again to the house of God. Long sermons, also, are a strain upon the minister who delivers them, which, if he possesses earnestness of manner, will very likely unfit him for a protracted ministry.

The introduction should have a proper relation to the length of the sermon. It stands as the portico of a building, the arched entrance and public pathway to a garden. Generally the introduction should be very brief, and should contain a simple exegesis of the text, the relation in which it stands, or some

biblical or other incident which may prepare the mind for the coming train of thought. But if the object be to explain a doctrine stated or referred to in it, or a topic introduced by it, the preacher should proceed as directly as possible, with or without an explanatory introduction. If the discussion is likely to be a long one, better hasten at once to the theme. It is bad policy to waste the moments when the congregation is all attention with unimportant or trivial remarks. Challenge the thoughtfulness of the audience at once, and make them feel you have important work on hand.

The structure of the sermon will vary according to the taste and mental habits of the individual. A man of systematic habits, of logical power, and of little imagination, will need his divisions accurately made to serve as steps of the stair-way on which he ascends. Those of a more philosophical cast of mind, especially if blended with imagination, will see their subjects rather in the light of a growth. There will be the seed-thought, the young blade, the stalk, the leaves, the flower, the fruit, without precise divisions technically marked. The form of division is best for severe argumentation; of growth, for illustration. But whether regular divisions are made or not, it is at the pleasure of the writer or speaker whether he shall announce them at first, or simply present them as they arise. If there be divisions announced, they should be simple in their character and few in num-

ber. I remember once to have heard a preacher, on the text, "Behold the Lamb of God," announce in rapid succession twenty-four characteristics in which men might behold him. When he reached the twelfth there was a look of surprise, and at the sixteenth of amazement; when he announced the twentieth a broad smile, and when he reached the twenty-fourth a suppressed titter through the whole congregation.

Whatever may be the plan adopted, the minister should evolve it out of his own thoughts, without any reference, at first, to commentaries or helps. The sermon will then be his own, fashioned in the mold of his own mind, melted in the crucible of his own brain. After his plan is arranged and the outlines of it framed, whether by division or by simple growth, he can very properly use assistance in its development. Let him then refer to commentaries; or if he has any sermon in his library on the same topic, let him refer to that, though with great caution. He may even possibly refer to sketches of sermons in their outlines. But his own plan should be resolutely fixed before he ventures on these references. From these sources he may obtain suggestions which will naturally join to his own train of thought, and thus add increase of interest to his subject. If a scientific illustration has occurred to his mind, let him be well assured that it is clear and accurate; if he is not a master of the science, let him refer to some standard work to verify his notions; but, as a

general rule, the more fully his illustrations are drawn from common life, or from subjects within the knowledge of his congregation, the greater the power of his sermons will be. But I repeat that, before planning his sermon, he should not read either plans or sketches, as they may tempt him to plagiarize; or, if he depends on plans, his own power of origination will be weakened, if not destroyed. Some men thus go on crutches all their days. I have sometimes heard it said, in reference to the sorrows and troubles of families, that in every house there is a skeleton. But if so, every true family desires to conceal it. If a minister has skeletons, let him keep them for his own use alone—peeping only now and then into his anatomical cupboard—and not expose himself by attempting to exhibit them as his own construction.

The structure having been arranged, the law of invention will come to his aid. This law you have studied in mental philosophy and in rhetoric. I may not attempt its discussion here. Yet as it is, in my opinion, the most important mental action to produce attractive, living sermons, it is worthy of passing notice.

From the earliest period of our chilhood to which memory reaches, we are conscious that an unbroken stream of thought has, at least in our waking hours, been passing through our minds. This is the origin of all knowledge and progress. I have already alluded to this mental movement as varying in speed and breadth in different persons. Into this warp we

throw our shuttles, and various are the patterns of our life-work. The fundamental laws we cannot change; but, to a certain extent, our minds are like rivers whose movements we can in part control. Intense interest may hurry the flow, and indolence may retard it. Reading and study add width to the platoon of thoughts which come abreast on the stream. Quickness of selection and intensity of recognition retain a part, and the rest flow on forgotten. We cannot drive an idea away, but we can look so intently on another that it hurries out of sight.

Theological invention is like other inventions: it requires absorption of the soul. Edison is always inventing. The telephone, the phonograph, the division of electric light, are but samples of his work. Electricity, with its correlatives, occupies his whole thought. He has no time to study Greek or Hebrew roots, or mediæval literature. He has wedded himself to natural science. So, the true minister, who is a man of one book and of one work, is intently studying how he can bring souls to Christ. He wishes to teach honesty, truthfulness, kindness, and generosity; but he has learned that the true way to them is by the cross; that just as men come to Christ, as they learn to be like him, they grow in every true principle and noble quality. Hence he lives to bring men to Christ. This is his one idea. It controls him by his consciousness of a divine call and the thought of eternal responsibility. It becomes

his dominant idea by night and by day, in public and in private. Around this great central thought all other thoughts gather. Whether he reads or converses, listens or looks, every incident and every event is measured by its relation to this. Gradually other thoughts drop out of view. Attraction of association, just as real and as powerful as attraction of gravitation, controls the movement of the current. For great success, the preacher cannot afford to divide his thoughts and energies. He cannot spend part of his time on matters wholly foreign, and then return to his pulpit with the power which he might have exercised. This intense interest or absorption of soul is the greatest power we can exercise over our thoughts.

Holding, then, the one leading idea firmly and vividly in his mind, and having consulted such helps as he deems best, the minister will watch the thoughts that come to him under the laws of association, and will select and retain such as he deems to be important to his subject. He sits, as I have seen a spider, with his web before him, and waiting until some fly has been caught and entrapped. So ideas fly and alight, and he secures them. It will be well for you, however, if, like myself, you do not sometimes think the proper flies are long in coming.

Some persons can best secure this continuity of thought by keeping the pen in hand, and watching the thoughts that gather around it. It holds them

at least closely to one point. Others invent best by walking the floor, or in the forest. Schleiermacher made his sermons leaning out of a window. I know one man who thinks best while whittling a stick. Others throw their heads back, and put their feet on a table—a dangerous habit to those who have a tendency of a flow of blood to the brain. Others I have known, and especially of the early itinerants, who thought best on horseback, and in whom the pure air of heaven, with changing landscapes of light and shade, and mountain and valley, gave a poetic tinge to all their meditations. The old circuit system among the Methodists, with all its difficulties and disadvantages, had a wonderful power of inspiration, which philosophical thinkers have sometimes overlooked.

Each must select for himself the system or plan which he deems best. The mode is not material, so the end is gained. One feels he can do nothing without the "soft afflatus of celestial fire." Another obeys the direction of Dr. Johnson to an inquirer: "Sit down doggedly, sir." The latter plan is the safer. The afflatus may seldom come, though when it comes more work and better work can be done; but the habit of sitting down "doggedly" will ultimately bring the afflatus more easily and powerfully.

While engaged in this work the minister should frequently refer to his Bible; and all his meditation should hold, as far as possible, a scriptural line.

Luther says of God's word, "It suggests more than all our commentators united." He should also compose in a spirit of prayer, feeling that, as his message is from God, nothing can be accomplished without the divine blessing. His study should have an atmosphere of prayer. It should be bathed in the breath which comes from Gethsemane and Calvary.

Sermons should be composed with the congregation always in view. They should be not simply discussions of subjects, strong arguments, elaborate in language and illustration; but the question should ever be present, Will this be profitable to the congregation? Will it reach the consciences of the stupefied and hardened? Will it arouse the careless and impenitent? Will it guard the young from danger? Will it attract them to the cross of Christ? Will it solve their perplexities? Will it dispel their doubts? Will it impart comfort to the sorrowing ones? Will it lead the Church to holy living and Christian activity? With questions like these, and with a single eye to benefit his people, the minister will compose a sermon not only excellent in itself, but especially suited to the needs of his people.

The sermon should also be prepared in the light of individual experience. The preacher who searches the depths of his own heart will find a fathoming line for the hearts of others. If he studies earnestly what will probe and arouse his own conscience, he will be instrumental in touching the consciences of others.

Let him notice in his own heart the character of temptations, their insidious approach, their apparent harmony with the laws of his being, their gaining strength by indulgence, and the power which they exercise, and his congregation will feel that he is speaking directly to them. If he uses the language of books, if he dwells on metaphysical speculations, if he uses technical terms, they will listen confused and bewildered; but if he speaks from the workings of his own heart, describes the struggles which actually pass within himself, not unfrequently will some member of his congregation become angry, supposing that some one has revealed to the minister his own inner life, and that he is seeking to expose him publicly before the congregation. The most effectual sermons are those drawn from the inner consciousness of the speaker. They have the freshness of life to the audience; for "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man."

Every sermon should have illustrations. They are like pictures to the eye which rivet attention, and help to fasten the truth in the memory. Our Saviour gave us most forcible examples of illustrations of various kinds. Part of these were from history; but, what is remarkable, they were never outside of scriptural or Jewish history. In scriptural history we have his reference to the days of Noah, a type of the days of the Son of man; of Jonah preaching to the Ninevites, and of their repentance; of the de-

struction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the visit of the Queen of Sheba, and the glory of Solomon. In the facts of Jewish history, we have Zacharias who died between the horns of the altar, the falling of the tower of Siloam, and the condition of the cities of Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. We have allusions to nature in the grain of corn falling into the earth and dying, and a new life springing therefrom ; the grass, which to-day is in beauty and to-morrow is cast in the oven ; the lily of the field, and the growth from the mustard-seed ; allusions to the sparrow in its littleness, the hairs of our head in their number, the redness of the evening sky as betokening fair weather, and that of the morning as foreboding storm ; allusions to the sheep, which now follow the voice of the shepherd and then wander into the mountains ; to the fowls of the air which are fed out of God's store-house, and the hen that gathers the chicken under her wing ; to the fox in his cunningness, the wolf in his cruelty, and the dog in his sympathy : allusions to the employments of men in their rural occupations—the farmer in sowing his seed and gathering his harvest, the vine-dresser in his vineyard, and the builder in his temple ; the ruler bestowing trusts on his subjects, the traveler going to a far land, the good householder, the faithful and unfaithful steward, the rich man in his sumptuous living, and his abundant harvest that calls for new barns ; the young man with his wealth and morality, and the

beggar in his poverty and friendless death. He turns to the employments of women, and notices the leaven hid in three measures of meal, the careful housewife sweeping her floor and finding the piece of money, the mite of the poor widow, and the docility of little children. He also speaks of the waywardness of the prodigal and spendthrift, and the yearnings of a father's heart welcoming his return ; the fatted calf, the ring, the wedding garment ; the very order of sitting at feasts, the alabaster box of rich perfume, and the love which issues from hearts, once sinful, now forgiven. It is astonishing how wide the range, and at how many points the Saviour's teachings touch the common life of man, and yet are contained in so small a compass. How sweeping and yet how minute his laws—the law of marriage and divorce ; the law of filial obedience, and the reproof of ingratitude ; the law of forgiveness, of fastings, of prayer, and of giving alms ; the duty of man in reconciling difficulties and offenses, and in obedience to the Government ! His field of view sweeps time and eternity, embraces supreme love to God and the love of our fellow-men as ourselves ; finds illustrations in the grave, the judgment, and the resurrection ; in the fall of Jerusalem and in the end of the world ; in heaven and in hell ; in the raptures of angels and in the torments of the lost. What a field for us to explore ! If the Saviour thus illustrated his sermons, why should not we ? Parable, allegory, metaphor, were sanctified by him

for our use. All the apostles followed the example of our Saviour—confining their illustrations to Jewish life, history, and habits, or to the great facts of Bible history—with the exception of Paul, who in Athens used illustrations from Grecian poets and sculpture, and in his Epistle to Titus an allusion to a Cretan author.

This gives us the additional law, that we are not confined to the Bible, or Jewish history or habits of life, for our illustrations, but we may draw them from the history and habits of the people to whom we minister. Thus the very knowledge of the employments of men in our congregations may give us power over them. The work of the assayer of metals, his refining-pot and fire and dross; the very nets of the fishermen, with their variety and needs of mending; the cases of the attorney, and the diseases and remedies familiar to the physician; the digging of coal in the mines, and the carrying of mortar or bricks by the day laborer; the preparation of meals, the care of the mother for her children, the economy and thrift of the housewife, are so many store-houses filled with almost exhaustless stores, which may be drawn upon at will.

These are plain to the understanding, life-like to the thought, touching to the sympathy, and enduring in the memory. Often have I inquired as to the preaching of some man of God who has been famous for pulpit power and success. His hearers spoke of him with enthusiasm and rapture. When I inquired

for his sermons, all that they could remember was his manner in the pulpit, or some illustration he had employed.

The minister should never forget that preaching is designed for immediate effect. So far as the mere thought is concerned, a book is better for study than a sermon simply uttered. The living preacher is with the word, to give it immediate force. His message is, "*Now* is the accepted time, and *now* is the day of salvation." Whenever he preaches with the fancy that his sermons will do good sometime next year he widely misses the mark. They are forgotten almost as soon as delivered. It is the present impression for which sermons are preached. Ever remember, young gentlemen, that God sends people to hear as well as you to preach; that your sermon may be the last one which some poor sinner may hear before he is summoned to the bar of God. Be earnest in your preparation. Say something which a poor soldier on the battle-field, whose life-blood is oozing away, or a culprit on the gallows, would wish to hear before dropping into eternity. Do not try to please so much as to do good.

As to style, I have no minute directions to give. Its various qualities you have learned, and I dwell only on one point. Use such language as the people can understand; though, while your language is simple, there is no reason why the gold in your sentences may not be burnished; nor will your steel be

less strong because it is polished. You are to read in the book of the law to give the sense, and to cause the people to understand. Bossuet says: "Sublime speech only amuses a few, and benefits fewer still." This plainness of speech must not, however, be confounded with that which is low or trivial, much less with what is vulgar. The language of the Saviour is a divine model.

Simple language stands in antagonism to high-sounding phrases, strings of superlatives, and rare or technical expressions. Very few persons in a congregation are acquainted with technical terms. Even theological terms are not comprehended by the masses, and hence their interest in the preaching is lost. I remember once to have questioned a college class of eleven on history. The word transmigration was used in connection with the old Egyptians. Only one of the eleven understood the doctrine of transmigration. They knew the meaning of the Latin word, the signification of its parts; but as applied to doctrine they had no accurate conception. Yet the young theologian will talk of transmigration or metempsychosis as if every child understood him. The aim of a minister should be, as some one has said, to use language that "the poorest old woman sitting in a corner might understand."

Simplicity of language also stands opposed to exaggeration. The pulpit should have a sacred regard for truthfulness of expression as well as of fact. If

the minister may exaggerate, why not the boy? and the preacher who labors after extravagance of speech is really impairing his own moral sense, and sapping the morals of his congregation. Men of intense earnestness, and of exceedingly vivid imagination or wildness of fancy, are exposed to this danger; and the habit grows upon them. A story is told of a minister so prone to exaggeration, that after his brethren had admonished him in vain they voted that he should be called before the bar of the Conference, and should be reproved by the presiding Bishop. The reproof was kindly and affectionately given, and was received by the erring brother with perfect submission and with tears. At the close he promised to reform, expressed deep sorrow for his error, said it had cost him many a pang, and that over it he had shed *barrels of tears.*

Nor is it necessary that all parts of the sermon should be equally elaborate. Much of it may be conversational in style, especially where the sermon is expository in its character. The close of a sermon, however, should be marked by earnestness and force. It was said by the wise man, "The preacher sought out acceptable words." And some one directs that you close your sermons so that the hearer will say to himself, "Were I to live a hundred years, I would never forget it."

The language of sermons should always be kind. During the preparation let the soul be filled with

love ; make no concealed or sharp thrusts, intending to wound feelings or repay some fancied insult. It may show the wisdom of the serpent, but not the harmlessness of the dove. I think it is Francis de Sales who says, " I would give one hundred serpents for one dove."

From some cause literary men and able thinkers do not always draw the masses. Their language is too learned, or their sympathy not apparent. It not unfrequently happens that some man of the people, some mechanic or day-laborer, will gather around him an audience which the man of culture cannot hold. The reason is, they understand him ; his language is the language of their lives ; he speaks in their habits of thought ; he seems to sympathize with them, and their very souls cleave to him. I call your attention to this, though I may refer to it again, because the times require that true ministers should not only be in sympathy with the masses, but that the masses should feel that sympathy. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that a wall of partition is rising higher and higher between the educated and the uneducated, between the capitalist and the laborer, and there are no men who can stand in the breach, none who can serve as a bond of union, but the ministers of the Gospel. On them, in this country, now and for years to come, rests, and will rest, a fearful responsibility. No other class, I repeat, can stand between the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the vir-

tuous and the vicious, but men divinely sent and commissioned of the Lord Jesus to stoop to the lowest depths of degradation, and yet to keep themselves unspotted from the world. The minister must ever give a helping hand to his brother. While he looks with affection on the wretched outcast, struggling in the mire of the pit of degradation, he also looks heavenward, whither he draws his erring brother, and where he beholds a Saviour's face wreathed with a smile of approbation. While he struggles to draw his brother from destruction, the Saviour's hand holds him and draws him nearer to himself. It is safe to reach with one hand to rescue the falling sinner from the very verge of hell, if with the other we can grasp the hand of omnipotent and boundless love. The office of the true minister is to stand between God and sinful man, listening to the whispers of love, and repeating them in the ears of the fallen ; touching the electricity of the cross, and sending its thrill through himself to his brother man ; holding the cords of love, and letting them fall lower and lower and lower to reach the vilest outcasts of earth, so long as he himself is bound by the cords of adoption to a Father's throne. How deep he may go, who can tell ? He may go so low that an astonished archangel shall exclaim, "O the depth of the riches both of the knowledge and wisdom of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

I shall never forget an exhibition I once attended

Shortly after schools for the imbecile were commenced in Europe, a young man, moved with benevolence, crossed the ocean to examine their mode of operation and success. Assured of their utility, he returned and commenced a similar institution. He advertised for the most idiotic and helpless child that could be found. Among those brought to him was a little boy of five years of age. He had never spoken or walked, had never chewed any hard substance, or given a look of recognition to a friend. He lay on the floor, a mass of flesh, without even ability to turn himself over. Such was the student brought to this school. The teacher fruitlessly made effort after effort to get the slightest recognition from his eye, or to produce the slightest intentional act. Unwilling, however, to yield, at the hour of noon he had the little boy brought to his room, and he lay down beside him every day for half an hour, hoping that some favorable indication might occur. To improve the time of his rest, he read aloud from some author. One day, at the end of six months, he was unusually weary, and did not read. He soon discovered that the child was uneasy, and was trying to move itself a little, as if to turn toward him. The thought flashed upon his mind: "It misses the sound of my voice." He turned himself closely to it, brought his mouth near the child's hand, and after repeated efforts the little fellow succeeded in placing his finger on the teacher's lips, as if to say,

"Make that sound again." The teacher said that moment he felt he had the control of that boy. He gained his attention, and by careful manipulation of his muscles succeeded in teaching him to walk, and then to read; and when I saw him at the end of five years he stood on a platform, read correctly, recited the names of the Presidents of the United States, and answered accurately a number of questions on our national history. I looked with astonishment, and said to myself, Was there ever such patience and such devotion? and how strong should be the love of that little boy for his teacher! I said, Was there ever an instance of one stooping so low, and waiting so long? Then I said, Yes, there was one instance—the Son of God came down from heaven, laid himself down beside me, his great heart by my heart, watched me with perpetual care, infused into me of his own life, and waited for nearly twenty years before I reached my finger to his lips, and said, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." What condescension, what love to fallen man! Christ stooped so low—it authorizes us to stoop, and wait on, and wait ever. Some of these wretched ones have been suffering for more than eight and thirty years, and have been lying at the edge of the pool waiting for us to come and help them into the troubled waters.

Ministers vary greatly as to the time of commencing their preparation for the ensuing Sabbath. I presume the majority commence early in the week, usually on

Tuesday, though I have heard of some who wrote their sermons from three to six months in advance. They are much more skillful marksmen, however, than I ever was, to hit the mark at so long a range. Others again, while their minds are full of subjects and full of the essence of preaching, do not select their topics until a day or two before, and sometimes only an hour or two before, the time of service. It is reported of St. Augustine and Chrysostom that they sometimes selected their subjects on their way to church. I have known ministers in various Churches to spend a large part of Saturday night walking the floor to compose their sermons. Of course, they did not write; and of course, too, their Mondays were very blue. As a problem in mental philosophy I do not pretend to solve it, but my own experience was, that when hurried in preparation, if I could have my text firmly fixed in my mind before sleeping on Saturday night, the plan of the sermon came readily to me on Sunday morning. The mode of preparation is as various as the time. Some ministers write out in full every word; others write the principal points and heads of arguments; others prepare brief notes; some no notes at all. Robertson's sermons, it is said, were sketched on a visiting card. Spurgeon uses simple notes. Dr. Edwards frequently preached without notes, while Dr. Chalmers wrote his sermons in full.

It is very seldom, as I think, that a sermon can be

very ably wrought out by the first effort of either speaker or writer. Though in a few cases it has been done, even then previous materials have been freely used. The life may be in it, but it is frequently like the tender blade as compared with the ripe ear. To have perfect force, it needs oftentimes recasting; always amending, pruning, or enlarging. Fénelon advises, "Keep the pruning-knife in hand, to cut away all that is useless." I think an excellent plan in preparing a sermon, whether it be written or delivered without writing, is first to make a simple outline; after preaching, look over and retouch that outline. Then some weeks after, having kept the subject in mind, and other ideas and illustrations having occurred, recast or amend the outline as judgment may dictate, and deliver the sermon if opportunity offers; again retouch, again let it rest, and if the same process be pursued half a dozen times during the interval of a year or so, the sermon may obtain that unity and beauty and force that will make it worthy of being written in full and laid carefully aside as the product of matured study and criticism.

A foolish impression exists in the minds of many against the repetition of a sermon; but what do we see in ordinary life around us? The lecturer on the platform delivers the same lectures for a dozen years I have alluded to Phillips repeating the same lecture for thirty years. Gough has been mimicking "Peculiar People," and Colfax has been "Across the Conti

nent," in almost every lecture-field, and people admire, applaud, and listen again. The politician goes through an entire canvass, not unfrequently repeating the same speech every day, and many of the same people listening to him. The songs of our sanctuaries are none the less sweet because they have been sung again and again. The ritualist offers the same prayer Sabbath after Sabbath, year in and year out, and his congregation is not weary; and even some non-ritualists acquire almost the same repetition in their devotional services. I remember to have listened in New York to a prayer in the opening service, which I greatly admired for its richness of thought, its comprehensiveness, its aptness and beauty of expression, and its fervency of spirit. After service I walked with a friend who was rather humorous. I spoke as I thought of the remarkable beauty and grandeur of the prayer, when my friend replied: "Yes, it is very beautiful; I have always admired it for twenty years."

If repetition is permitted to the medical lecturer for each succeeding class, to the professor of law in each different course, to the ordinary lecturer, and to the politician, why may not the minister, with great propriety, repeat a discourse which has commanded his best efforts, and is on a subject of essential importance to the congregation? Few men, however, could do what Dr. Chalmers did. When crowds attended his ministry he sometimes announced in the

morning that he would repeat the same sermon in the afternoon. On one occasion, when he made that announcement, Dr. Wardlaw was present, and gives us an account of the scene. The seats were occupied an hour before the time, the doors were closed, but the main entrance was kept vacant for better ventilation. An immense crowd was without, and as soon as Chalmers entered from the vestry, in spite of the door-keepers the front door was torn open, even from its hinges, and the pressing crowd filled every available spot in the church. Chalmers was grieved, and administered a sharp rebuke. Walking home with him, Chalmers said to Wardlaw: "I preached the same sermon in the morning, and for the very purpose of preventing the oppressive annoyance of such a densely crowded place I intimated that I should preach it again in the evening," and added, "Have *you* ever tried that plan?" Wardlaw says: "I did not smile—I laughed outright. 'No, no,' I replied, 'my good friend, there are but very few of us that are under the necessity of having recourse to the use of means for getting thin audiences.'" Like Dr. Wardlaw, I have never tried the plan, but if any of you should be overwhelmed with auditors it might be worth your while to try the experiment. Never, however, repeat a sermon through indolence, or to avoid the labor of preparing a new one.

As to sermonizing, I feel my incompetency to advise. I have never been a systematic sermonizer. I

have already said to you that in my early ministry I believed it impossible for me to become a successful preacher in the sense of being an orator. In addition to this, my health was very delicate, and I anticipated, at the longest, only two or three years of service. At that time, in the Church to which I belonged there were no theological schools; and in the West no theological seminary, founded by any Church, had gained much reputation; hence I commenced my ministry without any specific theological training. I had read my Bible thoroughly from my earliest childhood, for I cannot recollect when I could not read; and my study in the original languages, more especially in the Greek, had been for years a delightful occupation; but no one had told me how to make a sermon. I had listened to good preachers, but the only sermons I had ever read were those of Mr. Wesley. I did not know there was such a thing as a skeleton, or a book of skeletons of sermons; and in my youthful innocence I would as soon have stolen money from a bank as to have attempted to appropriate a sermon which I had either heard or read. I remember well how, about the close of my first year, an older minister put into my hand, and offered to lend me, a book of sketches. I happened to have common sense enough to decline the offer; so, without knowing how a sermon was made, save as mentioned, I began to preach. I did not try to make sermons. I felt I must, at the peril of my soul, persuade men

to come to Christ; I must labor to the utmost of my ability to get sinners converted, and believers advanced in holiness. For this I thought and studied, wept and fasted and prayed. My selection of words, my plan of discourse, was only and all the time to persuade men to be reconciled to God. I never spoke without the deepest feeling, and unless I saw a strong divine influence on the congregation I felt sad, and sought retirement to humble myself before God in prayer. My sermons were not well arranged; they sometimes had divisions, for I had heard ministers say firstly, and secondly, and thirdly. Sometimes I had a line written out here and there, and sometimes a few catch-words on a scrap of paper, but which I seldom, if ever carried into the pulpit, and very few of which I ever preserved. My ministry was one of exhortation rather than of sermonizing; and I looked for immediate results under every effort, or to me it was a failure. So my early ministry was formed. Whatever my method was, it was purely my own, and was adopted, as I have said, not to make sermons, but to bring men to God. No one could have been more surprised than myself when I began to find, not only that souls were awakened and converted, but that friends began to speak kindly of my simple talks as sermons. So I finished my first year. My second year I was stationed in Pittsburgh, where I was compelled to preach three times on Sabbath, and once at least during the week,

but not always to the same congregation. I was so driven, it seemed as if I could not change my plans. At the end of my first year there I had preached all I knew, and expected to be relieved. But I was unexpectedly returned, to preach three times on the Sabbath and once a week to the same congregation.

I had a membership of four hundred, scattered over the city. In addition to my preaching, I led the public prayer-meeting, spent one evening with my official members, led two classes, took a deep interest in the Sunday-school, and formed a class of young men, whom I encouraged in their reading, and helped in some slight degree to prepare for the ministry. And so, not expecting to be a preacher, I preached on; not expecting to live, I lived on. Many a time I resolved I would prepare better, and yet I often found myself brought up to Saturday evening or Sunday morning with comparatively slight preparation for the Sabbath. But I studied intensely. I arose early, and spent my forenoons faithfully—not in sermon writing, but in mastering standard works on theology, mental philosophy, and the natural sciences, of which I was passionately fond. I studied on my feet, and found my sermons among the sick and poor, in garrets and in cellars. Not expecting ever to do much in the pulpit, I spoke to men every-where of Jesus and his love, and had the satisfaction of seeing many scores brought to the foot of the cross. I expected by and by to find leisure to make better ser-

mons, but I have never found it. My boat got on the stream, and I have been borne down the rapid current without the time to rest, until I can almost see the mouth of the river, and the boundless ocean beyond. I would not advise any young man to do as I have done. I would breathe into you, if I could, the earnestness and love of souls and the devotion of my earlier ministry: but I would urge you to make a better preparation, and to become workmen more approved both of God and man.

LECTURE VI.

THE DELIVERY OF A SERMON.

IN the composition of a sermon the collection of material evinces the diligent student; broad and comprehensive thoughts reveal the great thinker; clear, beautiful, and forcible language manifests the cultured writer; but only in the delivery of a sermon does the true preacher appear. "His throne is the pulpit;" he stands in Christ's stead; his message is the word of God; around him are immortal souls; the Saviour, unseen, is beside him; the Holy Spirit broods over the congregation; angels gaze upon the scene, and heaven and hell await the issue. What associations, and what vast responsibility!

The sermon, considered simply as matter, might be contained in an essay or a book; that which constitutes its preaching is the appearance, utterance, and action of the living preacher. It is differentiated from the ordinary lecture, or oration, by the message being divine, and the speaker having been sent of God; and from the theological essay, or the published sermon, by the presence and influence of the speaker. The word of God is the constant quantity, the preacher the variable. If this be true, then that

preaching is best which, on the one hand, is most full of the divine message, and which, on the other, has the greatest personality of the preacher. The Spirit of God employs not only the truth, but the utmost powers of utterance, intonation, countenance, and gesticulation. I think Dr. Dick first suggested that the time might come when the preacher could sit in his study, and, by means of tubes properly arranged, could address a distant congregation. A similar use has been suggested for the telephone. While either of these processes would convey the sound to the ear with the accent and intonation of the speaker, who does not feel that by such a process the chief power and influence of the pulpit would be lost? Were not the presence of the preacher necessary, God could have employed the ministry of angels, or each person might have been addressed by a vision or a voice. The ordination of God requires that preaching shall be by a man of like passions and sympathies with other men. He stands as a witness and an illustration of the influence of divine power. As he knows the truth of the Gospel, others may know it; as he has felt the power of the Gospel, others may feel it, also. He tells them how he was moved; out of how deep a pit he was drawn; how his feet have been placed on the Rock of ages; how he repented and believed; how he was delivered from temptations, and how he is now filled with power to resist allurements and fascinations which once took

him captive; how that once he was influenced only by the visible and earthly, but that now he is under a sweet attraction of the unseen and heavenly. If, then, the personality of the preacher be so necessary and so potent a factor, what manner of person should a minister be, in all holy conversation and godliness! He should resemble Stephen in being a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. He should be able to say with Paul: "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily, and justly, and unblamably we behaved ourselves among them that believed!" If he causes in the minds of the people even so much as a suspicion that he is a wicked man, his power is at once impaired. Men may admire his mental vigor, his faultless rhetoric, his irresistible logic, and his overwhelming oratory; but their hearts will not be captivated by his utterances. People may flock to his ministry as they would visit the theater, the concert-room, or the opera, to satisfy their curiosity or gratify their taste. They hope to be charmed, not profited.

There are four different methods of delivering a sermon, each of which has in its favor the authority of eminent names and of conspicuous examples: First, reading in the pulpit from a copy previously prepared; secondly, reciting from memory a sermon which has been committed; thirdly, using notes more or less copiously, which are read or referred to in the pulpit, and to which may be added such illustrations

or amplifications as may occur to the mind at the moment, or which may have been more or less premeditated ; fourthly, speaking directly to the audience, without relying on any *verbal* preparation. These various methods may be, and frequently are, partially intermingled. The reader who becomes interested may pass over pages of his manuscript, reciting from memory, or may be so permeated with his subject that he ventures to vary from the language before him. So the extemporaneous speaker frequently quotes from memory Scripture texts or phrases, stanzas of hymns or lines of poetry ; or he may read a paragraph of statistics, or an excerpt from some favorite author. Reading secures to the preacher self-possession. He knows that he has his sermon prepared, and, consequently, has no burden upon his imagination or memory. Nor will the presence or absence of any persons in his congregation either annoy or confuse him. He has nothing to do but simply to read what he has written. He has confidence in the accuracy of his language and in the strength of his logic. He had time to revise and change while the pen was in his hand. Some ministers labor under the apprehension that, if they speak extemporaneously, they may forget the intended points of their sermon, or in the excitement of speaking may omit some necessary link in an argument. To others language comes slowly, and, under the hesitancy, utterance becomes difficult. So

some men of fine culture and of mental strength think themselves inadequate to the task of preaching without a manuscript. Others prefer the written sermon, that definitions may be more precise and argumentation more close and forcible. For purposes of controversy, also, the preparation and aid of the manuscript are considered valuable.

While admitting the full force of these statements, yet it seems to me the advantages are not so great as the disadvantages. In reading closely, little of the preacher's personal power, except his voice, is added to the written words. Even that is restrained, as the reading voice is not so full as the speaking one. The power of the eye, the play of the features, the light of the countenance, and the freedom of movement, are either lost to the audience or greatly restricted. This personal power being a great factor in preaching, what impairs it inevitably weakens the impression of the sermon.

It is alleged, however, that a minister ought not to read closely; that the eye need not follow the manuscript, except now and then; that the preacher may remember so much of his sermon that he can deliver it without much restraint. This is true. But if so, it indicates that a free delivery is better than reading If a man excels as a reader because he seldom looks at his manuscript, would it not be *excelsior* not to look at it all? Is it not the highest praise of a good reader, that he reads as if he were speaking? But is it ever

considered a compliment to a speaker to say that he speaks as if he were reading? Those who recite from memory do sometimes so appear, but it is ever accounted a blemish. If we consider the advantages carefully, we find that they inure to the preacher rather than to his hearers. But is the comfort or convenience of the speaker the chief end of preaching? If after he has written an argument, and has thus familiarized himself with it, and yet when in the pulpit cannot remember its various links, is it probable that his people can follow and remember it, who hear it for the first time as he reads? If the points of his sermon are so feebly connected that, after studying and writing, he cannot recall them in proper order, is the order very material? If he has not interest enough in his subject to remember the message which God sends through him, is it likely to interest the people? Nor is reading necessary for accurate definition. Does not the professor in his lecture-room state his definitions clearly, and does he not make them plain to his students? It may be said he is familiar with them; so should the minister be with definitions in theology. If, after having studied a course of divinity, and having prepared his specific sermon, he cannot trust to his memory for the necessary definitions, will they be easily comprehended by his people? As to controversial sermons, as a general rule, the less of them the better. I do not object to doctrinal preaching. Far from it. I strongly ad-

vise it in the didactic and positive form ; but I think it is seldom necessary in a controversial style. Mr. Wesley, who lived in a period of great theological controversy, said that out of eight hundred sermons which he preached in a year there were not more than eight of a controversial character.

The use of notes is less objectionable than reading a sermon from manuscript. They may refresh the memory in case of confusion of thought, and may impart confidence to the timid without withdrawing the attention very greatly from the audience. Yet it would be much better to have the notes thoroughly written on the heart. If notes be used the heads of a discourse may be read, and the amplification may be greater or less, according to the occasion or to the ability of the speaker.

Reciting from memory, if the sermon has been well committed, is not unpleasant to the hearer, as the preacher may have full play for all his powers. Actors display their utmost skill, and sometimes produce great effects, though their parts are committed and recited. This form of delivery, however, for ministers of ordinary memory, who preach two or three times a week, must impose a slavish service. Time is thus spent which should be given to careful study or to pastoral work.

It is objected to what is termed extemporaneous delivery, that the language is oftentimes incorrect, the thoughts are frequently incoherent, and the whole

performance is crude. This may be, and doubtless is, sometimes the case. But, as one has aptly remarked, there may be extemporaneous writing as well as extemporaneous speaking. Once for all, let me say, that extemporaneous speaking, or direct address, as I prefer to call it, does not exclude the most thorough and perfect preparation. It may be abused by ignorant and indolent men ; but it is not designed to diminish the necessity for extensive reading and careful thought. The order and the parts of the discourse should be clearly fixed in the mind ; illustrations may be selected and arranged ; suitable language for certain portions may be well studied, or the whole sermon may be written ; yet at the time of delivery, with the heart full of the subject, and with the outlines clearly perceived, let the speaker rely on his general knowledge of language and his habit of speaking for the precise words he may need. If he be deeply in earnest he will, as he proceeds, feel a glow of enthusiasm which will give a warmth and vigor to his expression. I do not deny that warmth and vigor may be gained in the study, if the writer fancies the congregation before him, and if he writes as if he looked them in the face, and measured the momentous results connected with the sermon ; yet there is a greater power in the actual presence of a living assembly waiting for the bread of life, and whose countenances respond to the words of the speaker.

It is said that critical audiences greatly prefer the

polished finish of a written discourse, and that they are not satisfied with extemporaneous delivery. There may be a few such congregations; but are they not found chiefly among those who reject evangelical doctrines, who attend service rather to be delighted than edified, and who say, "Prophesy unto us smooth things?" It may also be fairly admitted that where sermons are delivered purely for instruction, reading may not only be allowable, but may even be preferable; yet persuasion, rather than instruction, is the great end of preaching. Instruction is essential, but without persuasion the sinner is never moved or saved. In the lecture-room, in the study of science, reading is highly proper. And yet who that ever heard Agassiz did not admire the freedom and delightful ease with which he imparted, in familiar style, the highest truths and the most wonderful phenomena of natural science? It may, also, be admitted that an audience composed mainly of students, or of those whose minds have been long disciplined by educational processes, may be both pleased and profited by the reading of sermons. But there are few congregations where men of thorough culture compose even a large minority; for those who receive a collegiate, or even an academic, training bear a small per centage to the entire population The larger, though uncultured, class demands the greatest attention from the minister. It is a law of nature that heated air always ascends, but never descends. A fire may be

built upon the ice without having much effect upon it; so, in society, all extensive reformations begin with the masses. In the time of our Saviour the question was asked, "Have any of the rulers believed in him?" and under the labors of his disciples it is said that "not many wise, not many noble, were called;" yet the common people heard them gladly. In the Reformation during the sixteenth century the masses rallied around the standard of Luther and his coadjutors. It is proverbially said that capital is ever timid and cautious, and history shows that few men in prominent positions have become leaders in reforms. Erasmus, though detesting and satirizing the monks, and though helping to prepare for the Reformation by his Greek Testament, yet, fearing to break with Rome, declined to unite with the reformers. If ministers expect great success they must tread in the footsteps of the great masters, and throw themselves fearlessly upon the sympathies of the people. Yet I incline to the opinion that men of the highest culture enjoy an earnest extemporaneous form of delivery if the matter is of a high and elevated character. Franklin, cool and dispassionate as he was, said he would go twenty miles to hear Whitefield.

We are sometimes told that many of the most distinguished and successful ministers have read their sermons. This is readily admitted. There are others equally talented who do so still. Yet the number is comparatively small when contrasted with those

who do not read. Perhaps no name is more frequently quoted than that of Dr. Chalmers, as an instance of wonderful power and great success combined with reading; yet his great power was most conspicuously displayed when he left his manuscript, and uttered his thoughts in the most impassioned style. Even in his lecture-room he occasionally did so. Dr. Hanna says: "The interest was at once deepened and diversified at times by some extemporaneous addition or illustration, in which the lecturer, springing from his seat and bending over his desk, through thick and difficult and stammering utterance, in which every avenue to expression seemed to be choked up, found his way to some picturesque conception and expressive phraseology, which shed a flood of light on the topic in hand; and, again, by some poetic quotation, recited with most emphatic fervor, or by some humorous allusion or anecdote told with archest glee. It was almost impossible in such a singular class-room to check the burst of applause or to restrain the merriment." Of his pulpit efforts, a writer in the "British Quarterly Review" gives the following description: "Dr. Chalmers on great occasions was absolutely terrible. His heavy frame was convulsed; his face flushed and grew pythic; the veins on his forehead and neck stood out like cordage; his voice cracked or reached to a shriek: foam flew from his mouth in flakes; he hung over his audience, menacing them with his shaking fist, or he stood erect

maniacal and stamping." No marvel that the Scotch lady, who admired him, and yet was greatly opposed to reading, said, by way of apology, that it was reading "with a pith in it." Such delivery comes properly under the form of direct address, having no element in common with the mode in which a manuscript is usually read. Probably in four cases out of five of those who read sermons, their great power is just in that part which they do not read.

The voice of antiquity is almost unanimous in favor of the direct address. From the day that Miriam raised her song of joy on the banks of the Red Sea to the close of the prophecy of Malachi, the prophet sent of God usually spoke directly to the people. In the New Testament record there is not a single instance given of an address being read.

The blessed Saviour, the only perfect model, spake as never man spake. The apostles and their associates followed his example, preaching the Gospel with all boldness. Nor have we any historical evidence of sermons being read for the first four centuries. We know that Ambrose, Basil, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Augustine spoke even without notes, though, very probably, they sometimes prepared them. The Roman Catholic Church has pursued the same method almost without exception. The great French orators, Bourdaloue, Bossuet, Fénelon, and Massillon used the same style, though some of them wrote and committed their sermons.

Potter, in his work on sacred eloquence, which is indorsed by Cardinal Cullen and Dr. Newman, and the highest Roman Catholic dignitaries in Great Britain and Ireland, says: "In no sense of the word can reading be called preaching. A sermon is of its very nature a persuasive oration. In real preaching one man speaks to another. . . . The sermon which is merely read from a paper never has been, and never will be, any thing more than a piece of reading. Such a performance never has been, and never will be, made to possess those qualities of warmth or earnestness, of spontaneity and of special and varying application, which mark the persuasive oration, and which are distinctive of, and indispensable to, a sermon in the true sense of the word." The same view is taken by the Greek Church, though in the midst of its ceremonies the sermon is almost neglected. These two Churches embrace nearly three fourths of Christendom. In the commencement of the Reformation none of the great leaders on the Continent read their sermons; but in England the practice was early adopted. Calvin, writing to Somerset, says: "There is too little of living preaching in your kingdom, sermons there being mostly read. . . . But all this must yield to the command of Christ, which orders the preaching of the Gospel. No possible danger must be permitted to abridge the Spirit of God, or prevent his free course among those whom he has adorned with his grace for the edifying of the Church."

Among the Protestants of Europe reading is seldom practiced, except in England and Scotland. Even there such ministers as Spurgeon, Newman Hall, and Parker, who have gathered large congregations, speak without manuscript. So, also, do the Wesleyans and Baptists generally.

In this country the practice is divided; but revivalists every-where use direct address. So, also, the great majority of the ablest pulpit speakers in the land. Some of these write and commit; others, with great labor, premeditate and hold in memory; but the majority of able speakers who use this direct address, having the matter well prepared, rely on the inspiration of the moment and their power of language for their precise words. As services become ritualistic, the sermon, being deemed of less importance, is more frequently read. In other callings men in earnest use direct address almost wholly. The attorney never reads a plea for the life of his client before a jury. The politician on the platform —or, as it is termed throughout the West, on the stump—never reads a speech. The general, who addresses his officers or army before going into battle, never reads. And yet what powerful effect his few words sometimes have. I would, then, most earnestly advise every young man to cultivate this habit of extemporaneous, or direct, address. It will give him, other things being equal, more influence and more power over his audience; it will make the address

more life-like, as breathing his own impulses, and allowing him to use attendant or surrounding circumstances. Under the excitement of direct address some of the most beautiful imagery, as well as the most forcible expressions occur to the mind. The reactive influence of the congregation is, also, secured. The faces of his audience will oftentimes make suggestions, and he can skillfully vary his phrases or the length of the different parts of his discourse. While I, however, greatly prefer the direct address, each one must decide for himself, as no absolute and universal rule can be enjoined.

As to directions for reading sermons properly, I confess frankly my inability to give them. In forty-five years of ministry I have never attempted to read a sermon. A few Sabbath afternoon lectures to college students and some general lectures comprise the total of my experience in that direction. In the earliest years of my ministry I wrote and committed two sermons, which I delivered without difficulty. So even in that I am a novice. Notes I have occasionally, though seldom, used. While I bow at the feet of many distinguished men who read successfully, yet if I must give my advice as to the style of reading sermons, I should follow the example of *Punch*, who on a certain occasion offered a prize for the best essay addressed to those contemplating matrimony, and awarded it to one which read about as follows: "Advice to those about to get married—Don't!"

To attain the highest power in direct address practice is absolutely essential. If I am asked, How and when you shall begin? I answer, The first time you preach; and, if practicable, before a small audience. There is, certainly, some risk, but don't stand shivering on the bank; plunge in at once. Gilbert Stuart, in answer to a question as to how young artists are to commence their subjects, is reported to have said: "Just as puppies are taught to swim—chuck them in."

In the appearance and manner of the minister in entering the pulpit every thing careless or offensive should be avoided. He must have a due regard to his congregation, and a proper sense of conventional propriety. He must avoid all affectation of manner, and all appearance of display. An air of indifference shows his utter incompetency. The most able speaker feels a vast responsibility in addressing an audience; much more the minister, upon whose words the destiny of souls may depend. The most earnest minister trembles at the responsibility of his task, and yields only to his conviction of the divine call. Saint Cyran said: "I would rather say a hundred masses than preach one sermon." Luther said: "Although I am old and experienced in speaking, I tremble whenever I ascend the pulpit." Gregory of Nazianzen speaks of the "tempest of spirit" which a minister experiences. I have known many a minister who trembled so greatly that with difficulty he

ascended the pulpit steps; while, in other cases, the paleness of countenance and drops of cold perspiration have shown the intensity of the mental struggle. Nor is this mental pressure wholly unprofitable. It leads the minister to a sense of his own weakness and helplessness without divine aid. It brings him near the throne in earnest supplication. This mental intensity also gives a *stimulus* to thought; and when mastered by the preacher, he will speak in a loftier strain and with more spiritual power. Leaning on the divine arm for strength, he will have less regard to the opinions of his congregation, and will more earnestly desire to proclaim the divine message in all its purity, and with all its sanctions.

The proper management of the voice is of great importance. The preacher should aim to speak with sufficient force to be distinctly heard by the audience. To do this successfully, if the congregation be large, let him select some person in the congregation about two thirds of the extreme distance from the pulpit, and let him speak so as to be by him distinctly heard, and probably all the assembly will then hear, though those the most remote may need to be very attentive. But better they should have a slight inconvenience, in his first few sentences, than that his voice should break through overstraining. This precaution is necessary only in large edifices or before vast audiences. In ordinary churches the force employed should be such as at once to fill the entire room. Care should

be taken that the pitch should be as nearly as possible the ordinary tone of conversation, as this produces less weariness, and allows a greater range of compass both above and below. This variety is essential to prevent injury to the vocal organs, and it relieves that monotonous utterance which becomes very unpleasant to the congregation. This ordinary pitch, with variations above and below, gives the character of naturalness. Distinctness of syllabic utterance imparts the quality termed penetration, or of carrying the sound to the greatest possible distance without intermingling with other sounds. The voice should always be in harmony with the subject, and should indicate the earnest love, the deep solemnity, and the ardent zeal, of the preacher. It is sometimes called the sympathetic voice, and seems to blend the speaker both with his subject and with the feelings of his audience. He stands as if forgetting himself, and tries to bring about a perfect union of the subject and the hearers. The degree of loudness will vary with temperament and physical force. Whitefield's voice had such penetrative power that it was said that, standing on the steps of the then State-house of Philadelphia, some of his words could be distinctly heard across the Delaware River in Camden, and yet so soft and musical were his tones that they were not offensive to those who stood near him.

In varying the tones of the voice, a free use of the muscles of the throat and neck is very important.

For this purpose the proper movement of the whole body will assist. It is a law of our system that one set of muscles continuously employed become wearied, and oftentimes painful, from the superabundance of blood which flows to them. This is illustrated in that weariness of the limbs which is often felt in climbing a long succession of steps, as in towers or steeples, or in the strain of the back in using the sickle in the harvest-field. It applies, also, to the delicate and sensitive muscles of the throat. This is the chief reason why the voice tires more readily in reading than in speaking. The book held in one position, with the eye fastened upon it, constrains, to some extent, the vocal organs. In my own experience I have found that I cannot read aloud at night without hoarseness as well as I can during the day. In the day-time the posture is easily changed, the light being diffused all around; but in reading by gas or candle-light the book must be held in one position, and consequently the posture is more constrained. In the pulpit more force must be exercised than in ordinary reading. The tension of the muscles is greater, the flow of blood is more abundant, and, consequently, the danger from constraint of posture is increased. If you notice political speakers, attorneys, or statesmen, they give to their bodies a free play, and hence, though they make long speeches, their throats seldom suffer. If you notice those men in the ministry who gesticulate the most freely, who change

from place to place during the delivery of the discourse, you will find that they talk both long and loud without much injury. On the other hand, those who confine themselves strictly to one posture, who give themselves little freedom of motion, are much more liable to be affected with bronchitis. Indeed, I think I can give you an excellent recipe for acquiring his disease. First, write all sermons in a close, fine hand, which may be difficult to read. Secondly, place them on a pulpit so that you will be obliged to incline the face toward the manuscript, and to keep one finger following the lines, lest you lose the place; then with the other hand attempt to gesticulate, keeping the eye upon the page, and trying to glance now and then on the congregation, and, my word for it, you can have a first-rate case of clerical bronchitis in six months. The philosophy in this case is that to which I have already alluded. The difficulty arises, not from reading, but from the constrained position of the muscles of the throat. If, in spite of the manuscript, the subject is inwrought into your very being, if you can so forget yourself that you can throw yourself with your thoughts into the very face and eyes of the congregation, or stand erect, or move like the very spirit of a storm, you may read without injury.

Preaching, if properly practiced, so far from being injurious to the voice, is invigorating and strengthening. If the voice is used without straining, the

more frequently one preaches the better for the lungs, especially if that preaching can be joined with exercise in the open air. Calvin, who was unimpassioned, delivered sermons, addresses, and lectures, speaking daily. Luther, who was full of emotion, spoke about as frequently. Wesley, who was calm and quiet, though earnest, in the pulpit, as I have already stated, preached about eight hundred sermons a year, and in a protracted ministry of over fifty years probably preached as many as forty thousand times, in addition to all his writings, publishing, and care of the Churches. Whitefield, who was a perfect tempest in the pulpit, is said to have preached about eighteen thousand sermons. Nor were these instances, all of them, of physical robustness. Mr. Wesley was slender and rather delicate, and at one time suffered from hemorrhage, and it was supposed would die of consumption. It is unquestionably true, however, that some men, by their unwise and unnecessary vehemence, injure their vocal powers—generally, however, as I think, more from errors in diet and habit, than from the use of the throat and lungs. The vehemence of some speakers, though to a certain extent impressive on their audience, is really a barrier to their success. Cicero, when a young orator, strained his voice, and his friends advised him to abandon his profession. Instead of this he traveled abroad, studied under the best teachers, conversed with the best speakers, learned to restrain his rapidity of utterance and his

impetuosity of manner, and returned to his country to honor it with his oratory; and yet, I fancy, there was no little vehemence displayed in those orations against Cataline. The same trait was illustrated in the life of Dr. Durbin, who filled various high positions in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He commenced his ministry in Kentucky, a youth of seventeen; and so earnest and vehement was he that in a few months his voice gave way. His desire to do good, however, was so intense, that, when scarcely able to more than whisper, he visited the humblest cabins of the primitive settlers and the quarters of the negroes, and, sitting down by their firesides, talked to them of Jesus, and explained to them the way of salvation. In this quiet work his voice gradually recovered, and it gave him that peculiar manner which served as a background for those inimitable bursts of oratory which, for long years, made him second in the pulpit to no man in America.

The eye has an immense influence over a congregation It often speaks the feelings in advance of words. People are anxious not only to hear, but to see, the preacher, and this power of the eye is one of the great elements of oratory; yet other qualities may lead to great excellence and power without this. Blind men are sometimes very eloquent. Bourdaloue, who was famous for oratory, kept his eyes almost closed lest he might be diverted from thinking of the matter of his sermons which he had carefully pre-

pared. I have known some eminent ministers who looked above the heads of their congregations as if they were examining the structure of the ceiling, and others who kept their eyes closed, or nearly so, during the greater part of the sermon. In every case, however, their power over the audience was diminished by that fact. The true orator looks at his congregation, though in some of his pictures and in intense mental feeling he is for the moment oblivious of any thing which might occur. Still, his look is toward his audience, his thoughts are directed toward them, and, except in these periods of absorption, a mental and spiritual communion is maintained between the speaker and his congregation.

The value of earnestness cannot be too strongly stated. St. Augustine says: "It is more by the Christian fervor of his sermons than by any endowment of his intellect that the minister must hope to inform the understanding, catch the affections, and bend the will of his hearers." In various ages men have appeared who by their earnestness have roused whole multitudes, and even nations, to activity. This earnestness is not to be evinced merely in motion, but in each and every step of the preparation and delivery of the sermon; earnestness in reading; earnestness in writing; earnestness in prayer; earnestness in clearness and distinctness and force of enunciation; earnestness in managing the vocal organs, and earnestness in addressing the congregation in view of

the immense issues constantly at stake. A mother is in earnest when she pleads in tears with her wayward boy. A father is in earnest when, from a dying bed, he gives his last messages to his weeping children. Mr. Wesley was remarkable for his general quietness of manner, and yet his congregations felt and sympathized with the deep earnestness of his spirit. What is usually termed unction comes from a heart filled with love to God and man, and a voice and manner brought into perfect harmony with that mental and spiritual state. It is impossible to convey in words what this harmony is. It is a perceptible, but indescribable, concord between the subject and language employed, and the tone of voice and sympathy of spirit manifested in the entire movement of the speaker. As this mental state is kindled very largely by prayer, so it harmonizes with a prayerful utterance and a prayerful spirit.

The two great requisites for ready and correct extemporaneous speaking are a command of language and self-possession. This command of language may be best gained in two ways: First, by the practice of translating aloud, especially of reading in company a work written in some foreign language. This was recommended strongly by the elder Pitt, and has in some form been practiced by many eminent writers and speakers. Dr. Franklin was accustomed, when a young man, to read one of Addison's essays, and, holding the ideas in his mind, to write them out in

his own language, and then compare them with those of Addison: this was a species of translation. Without any thought of its influence on my future life, I acquired the habit when a youth of reading aloud to my friends from books in any language I studied, whatever I found to be either very beautiful or very interesting. Especially was this the case with the writings of Xenophon, and the orations of Demosthenes, Virgil's "Æneid," and Fénelon's "Telemachus." It was, also, my practice for a number of years to read in family worship from the original languages, thus accustoming myself to instantaneous choice of words to express the ideas of the writers. This practice, however, while giving me greater command of language, may not have made me quite so familiar with the idiomatic structure of other languages; at least, I never advanced as far as the sophomore who, descanting on the study of Latin, said that he could think better in Latin. I confess that all my life my thinking has been in English. Another method is to hold personal religious conversation with individuals. The process of explaining to one attentive mind some passage of Scripture, some doctrine of the Gospel, or urging motives for immediate personal action, imparts a directness of address and a readiness of language which will be of great service in the pulpit. There is philosophy as well as piety in visiting those who are sick and in prison, and in going out into the highways and hedges and compelling men to come to

the feast of love. To acquire chasteness and beauty of language some have recommended the reading of Cowper or Milton, or some poet who has written on religious topics, a half hour before entering the pulpit, that the mind may be carried in this elevated strain to its pulpit work. I would greatly prefer, however, spending that period in reading the words of Jesus or of inspired penmen.

Self-possession can best be gained by having the mind filled with the thoughts of the wonderful message about to be delivered, and the responsibility connected with it. If one feels that God is present, and the words are spoken for him, the timidity arising from the presence of the audience will vanish. It is well, also, not to keep in mind the distinguished men who may chance to be present, but to speak for the benefit of the masses. Luther said that he did not think of the doctors or professors, of whom he had some forty, but he addressed his sermons to the masses of the working-people, of whom there were some two thousand. Young men are prone to ask themselves, what will this doctor, or that judge, or this professor, say? and their preaching will then almost insensibly be framed to gain the approval of their most distinguished hearers.

Now, let me whisper to you two things: First, as a general rule, distinguished politicians are very poor judges of preaching. They study almost every thing else more than their Bibles, and hence make a sorry

attempt at quoting Scripture—like a former Governor of Texas, who said, in his message congratulating the Legislature upon the hopeful aspect of the country: "To use the language of the Holy Scripture, Now is the winter of our discontent made glorious by the summer sun." The other thing I would whisper to you is this: The most learned and thoughtful men, especially in theology, are the most lenient critics. It is true, if you discuss doctrines and advance heretical ideas, or if you attempt classical allusions and are not accurate, they will at once detect you; but if you keep within the range of ordinary discussion, and aim to do good, you will have no kindlier hearers. They know the difficulties of speaking, and are ready to make every proper allowance. They do not expect you to make sermons for them, but for the common people. Indeed, the greatest men are generally fond of the plainest diet at the table and of the simplest thoughts in the pulpit. So far as captious or unkind criticism is concerned, I would much rather speak before your learned and honored faculty than before a class of recently initiated freshmen.

You will never attain, however, to full self-possession in the pulpit without thorough self-abnegation. You must be so intent on the message as to lose sight of yourselves; you must lose the desire to be counted a great thinker or a popular speaker; you must become absorbed in your glorious work for

Christ, and must feel that you are polishing gems for him, that you are building a temple for his glory. This intensity of feeling, this conception of the grandeur of your work, will make your memory more retentive, your mind more active, and yourself less prominent. The question, probably, occurs to some of you, Shall the mind not then be occupied with a choice of words while speaking? I answer: Not directly; think nothing of the precise words you are to use. They will come, born of the idea and of intense feeling, but will be the result of your previous discipline and culture. If you should chance to stumble, do not stop to go back, but press on, following Whitefield's rule, never to correct any thing unless it was wicked. The same rule that I apply to words I would apply to gesticulation. Never try to make a gesture. Those only are natural which come of themselves. The man who is full of his subject, whose heart is burning for utterance, if his feelings are not restrained, will generally gesticulate earnestly. See a crowd of school-boys excited, and how earnestly they gesticulate. They speak all over. See brokers in a stock exchange. How they are wrought into a perfect frenzy, elevating their voice, extending their hands and arms, and making the wildest gestures! If ministers were to be half as much excited in the pulpit as these brokers are in the exchange, the world would pronounce them mad. In gesticulation, as in language, the discipline and

culture should be preparatory. Elocution, so far as the proper use of the voice, and so far as avoiding improper gestures, are concerned, should be studied previously, but no thought should be bestowed upon it at the moment. I know we are told that actors study every word, and prepare every gesture before a glass; and why not ministers? Is not their work much more important? The difference is, the minister is original. He gives expression to his own words and to his own feelings; he has simply to be true to himself. The actor is not thinking of himself; he has no thoughts, no feelings, of his own; he familiarizes himself with the thoughts of others through their words, and strives to imitate the expression of their feelings through his actions. His highest glory is to speak and act just as they are supposed to have spoken and acted. All his study and all his preparation bring him just to the point whence the minister starts, if his heart be full of his subject, and if he feels his deep responsibility.

While I earnestly recommend the study of elocution as a preparatory discipline, I once more caution you against imitation. Improve your own voice, but do not try to copy the voices of others. I have known some young ministers who have lost their sprightliness and vigor of utterance in attempting to acquire a deep and sonorous mode of utterance: and students from different schools of theology and different colleges or universities can frequently

be distinguished from each other by the manner and intonation acquired in their elocutionary exercises.

For myself I never had any difficulty in finding simple language to express my thoughts ; and, owing to the manner in which I commenced, I sought for little else. My great anxiety to reach some hearts early led me to forget, in great measure, the presence of men of superior intellect and commanding position. My voice seemed in every way unfit for a public speaker. It was weak, slender, and the pitch was high, tending to falsetto, and hence easily cracked or broken. By close application to study I had become stooped ; my lungs were weak, I was troubled with a cough, and many of my friends feared that I was tending to consumption. I spoke because I must speak. At the end of my first year physicians advised me to desist, or I would probably not live more than a year. I was junior preacher on a six-weeks' circuit, on which I preached twenty-eight times in the round. Not satisfied with this amount of work, I assisted in taking up six additional appointments, making thirty-four. One of these appointments was in a small village, in the house of a humble widow, and the room would not accommodate more than twenty people. On my second and last visit I was informed that a physician, who was said to be an infidel, but a man of talent, desired to see me, as he thought he could be of some service by directions as

to health. I called upon him. He said he had heard I was in feeble health, and as he had suffered greatly for years, but had recovered, he thought possibly he could give me some simple suggestions. I was pleased with his general advice, and at the close of the interview asked him what he thought of my continuing to preach? He answered, that as to the religious question he had nothing to say, but, simply as a physician, his advice would be for me to ride eight or ten miles and preach once every day. The suggestion harmonized so perfectly with my own feelings that I resolved to follow it; and the only request I ever made for any appointment was, on account of my weak lungs and the necessity of exercise, that I might have an appointment where I could ride eight or ten miles and preach every day. My presiding elder promised me his full concurrence and his heartiest efforts, and he had no doubt of success; but when the appointments were read out at the close of Conference I was sent to the city of Pittsburgh, with its thick coal smoke and dust, amid the prevalence of the cholera. My friends were fearful and disheartened, but I believe it to be of God, and went. My health was preserved by careful attention to diet and exercise and regular hours, and by abundance of preaching and pastoral visiting. My voice gradually strengthened, and, though never musical, acquired power to address the largest congregations. My conviction to-day is, that had I not

preached I should, in all probability, have fallen an early victim to bronchial or pulmonary disease. Often when called upon to face danger, that passage has seemed to ring in my ears, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it."

LECTURE VII.

MINISTERIAL POWER.

PREACHERS greatly differ, not only in the matter and manner of their sermons, but, also, in the results which are achieved. This is especially true in the reformation and conversion of souls, and in the upbuilding of the Redeemer's kingdom. The element which gives success is termed ministerial power. It is so subtle and spiritual in its character as to be beyond the reach of clear definition or explanation. The term, however, is scriptural, and, though somewhat indefinite, we have nothing more expressive. It is a quality without which sermonizing is useless, and for which every young minister should, therefore, most sincerely and earnestly strive.

St. Paul declares the Gospel to be "the power of God unto salvation," evidently using the phrase as in contrast with, and superior to, the power of Rome—then the greatest nation in the world. It is a system of power because of the influence which it exercises not only on the hearts and lives of men, but, also, on the growth and destiny of nations. The apostle speaks of this power as being present in his ministry, when he says, "Whereunto I also labor, striving ac-

cording to his working, which worketh in me mightily," or with power. It is, also, compared to the power which raised the Lord Jesus from the dead; and the apostle says, "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." The word "power," as used in our English version, is represented in the Greek Testament by several distinct words. One of these is *kratos*, or its collateral forms, which signifies strength, or the manifestation of physical force. The two chief forms, however, are, *exousia* and *dunamis*. The first of these indicates authority as exercised or conferred by a ruler, and seems to intimate official privilege or prerogative, thus: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth;" "To them gave he power to become the sons of God;" and Christ gave to his disciples "power over unclean spirits, and to heal all manner of sickness." Their official prerogatives and their miraculous endowments are in all cases expressed by the word *exousia*, though in a few cases *dunamis* is joined with it. Ministerial power is everywhere expressed by the word *dunamis*, as in St. Luke: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." The same word is used in the pentecostal scene, and is employed by the apostles to express the spiritual power of the ministry, as: "God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;" and "My speech and my preaching was not with

enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." As to preaching, he says: "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness: but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God." The word thus employed indicates a power bestowed upon the individual as a divine gift, not for his own edification, merely or chiefly, but as a force working through him on the hearts of others. If I may use the phrase, this ministerial power is a moral dynamite, intrusted with the minister, and, to a certain extent, with every working Christian, which is superadded to his personal religious experience. This was emphatically true of the apostles. Three years they had been with Christ; they had seen his spirit and heard his teachings. Some of them had been with him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and had beheld his glory. They had been placed in the apostleship, and had received the gift of working miracles, and yet they were to wait for "power from on high."

This power, then, is not synonymous with conversion. Jesus had recognized the disciples as not servants, but friends. He had chosen them out of the world, and had comforted them with the assurance of his richest blessings. After they had forsaken him in the hour of terror, and had fled, they were not forgotten of him. He came to them in the

upper room in the demonstration of love, showed unto them his hands and his side, and said, "Peace be unto you." Those words of peace had the accents of forgiving love; and who can doubt that, "being justified by faith, they had peace with God?" More than this, he breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." Who could desire more for his own experience than to feel the breath of a triumphant Saviour, and to receive the indwelling of the Holy Ghost!

Nor is it the same with the highest possible condition of religious joy. They were "glad when they saw the Lord." Even the last doubts had been dispelled from the heart of Thomas. For forty days they had frequently seen him; they had heard him "speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God." They beheld him ascend from Mount Olivet to glory, and angels standing "by them" spoke of his coming again. Could they be happier? The cross, the agony, the sepulcher, have all vanished; an ascending Saviour, a cloud of glory, angelic promises, are in their stead. Then "they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God." What supreme bliss! and yet it is not ministerial power.

Nor is it a call or a commission to preach the Gospel That they had previously received. After his resurrection, when he first spoke peace, he said:

"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." And before his ascension he uttered the great commission, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." Yet with this rich experience, and this grand commission, the direction comes: "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

If we endeavor to analyze the elements of this power in itself, I think we shall fail. It is spiritual and invisible. All we can do is to trace the circumstances under which this power is given, and the results which flow from it. Indeed, power is in its nature indescribable. It is known simply by its results. Gravitation, that greatest of all material powers, ceaselessly active, every-where potent, is wholly beyond our research, or even our conception. Where are those cords, stronger than steel, which bind the planets to their centers? Where are those unseen ties that, like a universal net-work, envelop every atom in the air, and make it fall to the earth, and not merely to the earth, but in a direct line toward the center of the earth, though it be thousands of miles away, and can never be reached? It seems an emblem of God, filling all space, operating through all matter. If the dream of astronomers be true, that not only secondaries surround their planets, and planets their suns, but that suns revolve around the center of immense systems, and all these centers through the immensity of space move round one

great center, who can even conceive the magnitude of a force that can thus operate through infinite space with precisely the same law of attraction for vast worlds and for infinitesimal atoms? It is a force never seen, and yet it operates alike in the sunshine and in the dark. It is never heard, and yet it sends its myriads of worlds singing and shining on their way. He who made that power by the word of his Spirit gives that Spirit to work in us and through us. Nor is it the only exhibition of power. Consider the chemical affinity that draws together the acids and the alkalies. With what constant and unseen power does it operate! Think of that magnetic power which makes the steel filings, though in a mass of dust and rubbish, and clippings of tin and brass, leave them all and fly up and kiss the magnet. It touches that pivoted needle, and lives and treasure are secure upon the stormy ocean in the darkest night by its unerring guidance. The winds blow ever so fiercely, the cold comes ever so freezingly, the waves roll ever so furiously, and the vessel pitches and sinks as though it would be submerged; and yet that strange influence, unseen, unheeded, unfelt even by the most sensitive nerves, holds the needle in its place. Who can tell what is power? We see it in its effects, we measure it in its results. So with spiritual power. We cannot tell "whence it cometh, or whither it goeth;" but it breathes upon the human spirit—the stormy passions subside; falsehood, fraud,

lust, and avarice disappear ; and truth, purity, meekness, and love reign supreme in the soul. It is a transmutation beyond what the philosopher sought in the fabled stone whose touch would transmute into gold. It is a new creation from the breath of Him who created all worlds and breathed into all spirits. Spiritual power is not beauty of presence nor dignity of form. It is not learning, nor rhetoric, nor logic, nor oratory ; but it can use these for its one great end. It can burn and shine in the highest periods of the most eloquent speaker, and it can thrill in the accents of the unlettered man. It can invest the words that drop from the mother's lips, and it can wing the lispings of the little child. It can use all there is of a human being, and of his acquirements, for the glory of God and for the advancement of his Church.

This spiritual force, in its highest human manifestation, is ministerial power. It employs and utilizes all other forms as its agents. It uses the power of thought, which is immense in its character—the thoughts not only of good men, but of angels and of God—thoughts which were from eternity, and thoughts which shall triumph when earth's history shall have closed. It uses the power of language in all its multifarious forms. Its tongue of fire is to preach among all nations, and to carry to every heart, through its own peculiar idiomatic expressions, the knowledge of the power and love of God. It employs oratory in

its highest efficiency; and how great is that influence which man may exercise over his fellow-man! Listen to the eloquence of Demosthenes, as he stirred the people of Athens, as a sea is stirred by the storm, with his wonderful Philippics. See how Cicero moved the Roman people and the Roman Senate. Look at the power of Peter the Hermit, arousing the nations of Europe to that fearful Crusade; the power which such men as Burke and Fox and Pitt and Sheridan displayed in the British Parliament; the power which Napoleon exercised over his soldiers by his short, fiery speeches, as he pointed to the enemy on the battle-fields of Europe, or called them to behold how forty centuries looked down upon them from the top of the pyramids of Egypt. If there be, as is claimed by some, a magnetic power which kindles in the eye and sparkles responsively from the speaker to the hearer, and from the hearer to the speaker—if there be some subtle current established between them which is manifested in the energy of the speaker and the rapt attention of the hearer—an indescribable force flowing in some way from the intensity of a soul speaking to souls, all that power is subservient to the true and faithful minister.

In examining this promised power from on high, its first characteristic is that it proceeds from the Father. Jesus said, "Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you;" and again, "Wait for the promise of the Father, which ye have heard of me."

Why was it called the promise of the Father? One reason, doubtless, was that it had been foretold by Joel and Isaiah before the coming of Christ. Another reason, probably, was that when Christ promised the Comforter, he said, "Whom the Father shall send in my name," and again, "Which proceedeth from the Father." Just at this point arises the great "*filioque*" question which has divided the Eastern and Western Churches, but which I pause not to notice. The expression, also, may indicate the wonderful works to be wrought under the Gospel dispensation. The "power from on high" was to be a power like that occasionally seen in ancient times. Indeed, the Old Testament is largely a revelation of the power of God as working upon many classes of people, and under a great variety of circumstances. The call and preservation of Abraham, the deliverance of the Israelites, their preservation in the wilderness, their entrance into Canaan, and their subsequent history, abound with wonderful displays of the power of God among the highest and the lowest, among princes and subjects, prophets and priests, men and women in every employment in life. Among these wonderful displays those connected with worship have an intense interest. The word of the Lord on Mount Sinai made the people to quake and fear. When the tabernacle was set up the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the people, "and there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon

the altar the burnt-offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell upon their faces." So when Solomon had finished the temple, and the sacrifices were set in order, and he had offered prayer, "the fire came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering and the sacrifice," "and when all the children of Israel saw how the fire came down, and the glory of the Lord upon the house, they bowed themselves with their faces to the ground upon the pavement, and worshiped, and praised the Lord, saying, For he is good; for his mercy endureth forever." So when at Carmel, at the prayer of Elijah, the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, the people "fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." Under the influence of such a scene the people took the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and they were slain, notwithstanding Ahab, who was their friend and patron, had all the power of the sovereign. The revelation of the Father was one of power. "Our God is a consuming fire."

Strangely, too, the movements of science, art, and commerce seem to wait on ministerial life. Printing had just been invented in time to give the Bible to the people in the era of the Reformation. The magnetic needle was applied to navigation to send that Bible and its ministers to all lands. The spirit of exploration, which has sought for every island and is even now treading the pathways of centra

Africa, and of the steppes of Asia; the study of all languages, and the preparation of grammars and lexicons; the knowledge of the currents of the sea and of the air, of the power of steam and of electricity; the very unbraiding of the sunbeams to read what is written between the strands—all these, with many others, are so many voices of nature crying, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord." They are so many indications, that when man will carry God's message, all the power of omnipotence waits on his service. Instead of the gift of tongues, there is the translation of the Bible; instead of Philip being caught away by the Spirit of the Lord, and found at Azotus, he steps on the steamship or on the cars, and is borne to his mission. Thus the omnipotence of the Father accompanies and works in harmony with the gift of ministerial power in accomplishing its great results.

The second characteristic of this power is that it is "from on high." It comes directly from the throne. Jesus "ascended up on high; he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." "Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," hath he sat down at the right hand of the Father, and hath "shed forth" this power upon the sons of men. It is not found in books, nor does it come from books. It is not to be found in the teaching of professors, or in the curriculum of the schools. It is a gift directly

from God so inwrought among our own thoughts, convictions, and impulses, that we cannot tell precisely what is from ourselves, and what is directly from above. Have we not analogies of such intermingling in nature? Placed on the insulated stool, and connected with the electrical machine, we are filled with electricity—filled so full that every hair upon our heads stands almost erect. Yet we have no consciousness of it. But let any one come near us, and the fire sparkles from every part. So we may be filled unconsciously with divine influence, which shall sparkle from our eyes and issue in words of power from our tongues. How wonderfully is science revealing to us divine possibilities! The electric messages we send to our brothers, over mountains, under oceans, across the globe, so quietly, unseen and unheard by those around—do they not illustrate how God can reach our hearts, how he can infuse his own power, without any outward manifestation? This power is not only "from on high," it is a connecting link between the throne and our hearts. It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, not for regeneration, not for sanctification, but to use the whole of a purified nature, and especially the *tongue*, for aggressive Christian work.

In other characteristics and conditions we have beautiful illustrations in the holy Scriptures. Let us consider Ezekiel's vision of the valley of dry bones. He was first required to pass through the valley to examine

the bones round about, and to see that they were scattered and very dry. I think this gives us the first condition for the exercise of this power—a clear conviction of the ruined state of humanity. This impresses the minister with the vastness of the work, and makes him terribly in earnest to save lost humanity. Any theological view which teaches that humanity is not ruined, that the nature of man is not depraved, that the whole head is not sick, and the whole heart is not faint—any theology which finds natural soundness in man—tends to weaken the feeling for the necessity for superhuman effort in his behalf. If the disease be not a terribly fatal one, palliatives or temporizing expedients may be employed. The whole history of the Church shows that where depravity has been doubted, efforts for human salvation have been relaxed. An aggressive Gospel has always been founded on the idea of human ruin.

The prophet was then asked: "Can these bones live?" Is there any way known to man, any remedy of whatever character, that can possibly restore to them life? The prophet answers: "O Lord God, thou knowest." As much as to say, With man it is impossible. Here we find the second condition of ministerial power—a clear conviction that there is no hope for man apart from divine interposition. There is no philosophy of education or culture, no combination of associations, that can save the human soul. There is no name given under heaven among men

whereby we may be saved—no plan outside of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ which gives any hope among those who have heard the Gospel of either present or future salvation. Any indefinite fancyings as to some other scheme of mercy, any notion that there may be some future plan not revealed, hid away in the countless ages, only serves to weaken the intensity of the minister's agony to rescue souls from eternal death. The history of the Church shows—and our own observation confirms that history—that where men fancy that either here or hereafter heaven may be gained otherwise than by the cross of Christ, then the preaching of that cross becomes less necessary for the salvation of men; and, practically, those who embrace such doctrines are less earnest for the aid of the Holy Spirit. The true minister of to-day, as the apostle of old, says, "Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." He believes, also, that there is a divine power which can save and rescue fallen man; that this power is in the Gospel, and that it is exercised through the preaching of the word. This condition involves the idea of expectancy on the part of the minister. He believes that while he preaches, and as he preaches, a divine power accompanies his word, and is mysteriously working in the hearts of his congregation.

A third condition is found in absolute and unqualified obedience to God's command. Ezekiel stood in

the midst of the valley where the bones were scattered. All signs of even recent life were gone; there was no perfect skeleton even, but pieces here and there; yet he was commanded to say, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." No more discouraging field could possibly be found, no place less likely to yield results. How could the bones hear? How could life be restored? Yet the prophet did as he was commanded; he did his duty, his whole duty. So the minister goes to the most unpromising field—to a place of outlawry and crime, to places of heathenish darkness, to cannibals who have already killed and eaten other missionaries. He obeys the command, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." That is his part, and history proves that the bones do hear the word of the Lord. The point at which supernatural power comes in, is the completed work of the ministry. Not waiting until the end of his mission, but on each completed stage, divine power supplements human power. The approbation of Christ on human efforts was given in the words, "She hath done what she could;" and when a minister does all he can—when he brings his all of strength, and study, and skill, and tact, and prayer—when he has exhausted all the resources which God hath put in him—then divine power accomplishes the rest. But if the preacher expects divine power to supplement his indolence in the study, his waste of time in frivolous conversation, his hours

spent in amusements, his waste of opportunities and energies, no wonder that he shall be disappointed. To him the divine voice is: "Cursed is he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully." He is Ananias holding back part of the price.

Another condition is the promise of hope uttered by the prophet: "Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live; and I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord." This is the Gospel of promise and of hope; it is to be addressed to the lowest and the most degraded. The thunders of the law are not suited for such an audience; they come to the grand and self-opinionated ones of earth. But to the poor and wretched and down-trodden among men there come the whispers of mercy in the Gospel of hope: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Under this preaching of promise there was a wonderful shaking; bone came to bone, and sinews and flesh came upon them. Then the message was given: "Prophesy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live." The prophet adds: "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an ex-

ceeding great army." Here we have the invocation or call for the divine Spirit as the sole agent of life and power; and all preaching fails which is not accompanied with an earnest and public recognition of the absolute need of the divine Spirit. The minister is almost blasphemous if he takes to himself the glory of the accomplished work. Long ago God said by his prophet, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

It may be said, this vision was applicable only to the people of Israel, and that it pointed to their national restoration and rehabilitation. Admitting the primary application, the principle of the divine work and of human recovery is in all ages the same, and the spiritual is oftentimes mirrored in the material.

Let us turn to the pentecostal scene, where the promise of the Father was fulfilled, and this wonderful endowment was bestowed. About eight hundred years previously the Prophet Joel had described it with wonderful minuteness. His prophecy was about to be fulfilled. It was the promise of the Father, which had been repeated by the Saviour himself. The disciples were "with one accord in one place." That place, I presume, was some part of the temple, for it was the hour of prayer. They had met in it time and again, for they had been daily in the temple, praising and blessing God. I seem to see them drawn closely together—the one entire Christian

Church, apart from the world—apart from other Jewish worshipers.

At the offering up of the evening sacrifice, some fifty days before, the veil of the temple was rent while Jesus hung upon the cross. It shadowed the end of temple sacrifices, the close of the Jewish day. Now, at the offering up of the morning sacrifice, indicating the opening of a new service, with its day of coming glory, there came over this assembly "a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." As in the days of Elijah, there was, first, the strong wind, then the fire, and then the divine endowment. The fire was the emblem of divine presence. It was so to Abraham when the smoking furnace and the lamp of fire passed between the parts of his sacrifice, denoting the season of affliction followed by divine interposition. It was the emblem in the burning bush, in the pillar of fire, in the tabernacle and in the temple, and in the consuming fire which came down at Elijah's prayer. Heretofore it had been a unity whenever, wherever seen. Now, as I fancy, it came as a unity over the heads of the disciples, overshadowing them all; and then out of that unity came divided or separated

tongue-like forms, one of which sat upon the head of each of them—not, as I understand it, each tongue cloven, but each tongue cloven from, or coming out of, this unity. It was the symbol of one divine power working in each individual, and speaking alike in the tongue of every nation. It was the symbol of God's presence passing from the outward and material into the inner and spiritual. God in man becomes the tongue of fire, or a burning impulse to proclaim a divine message to humanity.

This endowment was partly miraculous, and designed for that age; partly permanent, and intended for all ages. It was not a gift of working miracles in general, for the apostles had previously received that, but was confined simply to speaking in other languages. It was a prophecy of the coming ages. As the people came running together from other parts of the temple, and then from all the city, the strangers and sojourners in Jerusalem were addressed by some one of the disciples in his own language. The infant Church, which had just now been in one place in prayer and supplication—the happy, united rejoicing Church, separate from the world and Jewish worshipers—is now scattered among the worshipers, and through the city, telling the wonderful works of God: a type of the Church, as she throws herself into all lands, and among all peoples, telling, in their own language, and not in the old Hebrew or Greek, or even the Latin, the won-

derful story of the cross. This was the baptism of fire of which John the Baptist spake when he said, "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." It was the voice within saying, "Go, speak unto the people all the words of this life." A measure of it is, I think, put into the heart of every truly converted man, and he longs to tell what God has done for him; but in its highest form it comes upon those whom he thrusts out as laborers into his harvest. Perhaps in its very highest form it comes on those who, in obedience to its mandates, take their lives in their hands, and go to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Separating, then, the abiding power from the temporary and miraculous, there seems to be, first, a strong impulse to speak for God; like the youthful Jesus, when he talked with the doctors in the temple, and said, in answer to his wondering mother, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" Secondly, this baptism does not change the natural characteristics of the minister, but works through them. Peter, quoting from Joel, said: "Your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." In the young, imagination is prominent. They are ever building castles, and looking through prisons, and covering the future with colors of gorgeous hues. God uses all that imagination, and all that hopefulness and fervency, and all that energy and activity, which the young possess

The old men dream dreams. Memory predominates. They bring out of its store-house incidents of the past, and age ever should be rich in thought and instruction. The sons and daughters shall prophesy. Even the little children join in songs, and earth's sweetest music is heard when "out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise." Nor is this divine endowment restricted to the influential or the wealthy; it is given, also, to the servants and to the handmaids. In the days of servitude it glowed in the heart and spoke from the tongue of the pious slave. It works through all classes and conditions of humanity, using all peculiarities of mind and all circumstances of humanity. May I suggest, before passing from this pentecostal scene, that the prophecy of "wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke; the sun" "turned into darkness, and the moon into blood"—all of which were to be "before that great and notable day of the Lord come"—may have been already accomplished. Judah had been shaken; its scepter had forever departed; the star of Bethlehem had gilded the heavens; the blood of innocent children had been shed; miracles, unnumbered, had been wrought by the hands of Christ; the sun had been veiled in darkness for three hours while Christ hung upon the cross, and the earth had quaked as with fear.

This baptism of fire wrought great changes in the

character of the apostles, and manifests the same elements in the hearts of true ministers every-where. First, it imparted to the apostles a high degree of moral courage. Their timidity was changed to bravery. They no longer fled from persecutors or assailants; but, standing in the temple, proclaimed the power and the glory of the Lord Jesus. They feared neither prisons nor death, though their preaching necessarily aroused the strong antagonism of the Jewish authorities. They proclaimed him to be pure and spotless whom they had crucified as a malefactor. No marvel that the Jewish council said: "Ye intend to bring his blood upon our heads." Reproved, and even scourged, they received the punishment with joy that they were "counted worthy to suffer for the Lord Jesus." Imprisoned for the night, they spake as boldly the next morning, and men were astonished when they saw their heroic firmness in giving their testimony to the truth. It is supposed that all of them but one suffered a violent death for their attachment to Christ. The clear conviction of his divine mission still gives the minister a foundation for his heroism. He hears the voice which said to Abraham: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." The same conviction of duty which sent the patriarch from Mesopotamia to Canaan, which sent the prophets on a holy mission, and inspired the heroes of Israel, works in the heart of the minister He has heard the voice saying, "Go,

preach ;" and it has been as a fire in his bones. This is usually strongest with the young minister, and especially with those who, under circumstances of great distress and difficulty, go forward in the discharge of duty. Too frequently, as we become accustomed to the ministry, and are in comparatively comfortable circumstances, this thought of the divine mission is less prominent and abiding. Hence, says the apostle, "Stir up the gift of God within thee ;" uncover the coals which have become imbedded in ashes, that the pure air of heaven may make them glow and sparkle. All ministers, in every age and under all circumstances, need this conviction. Every time they ascend the pulpit they should feel that they are sent of God, sent with a divine message, and sent to that specific congregation. Among modern ministers Mr. Spurgeon is one of the strongest illustrations of this conviction. He is a Calvinist of the ultra school, but his Calvinism seems to me to take one special form. He feels he was predestinated from all eternity to preach the Gospel in that Tabernacle ; that he was sent by God to present a holy message to that people at every appointment. He steps on the platform with this air, enters upon his work as if he had something of importance to say, and challenges the attention of his congregation by his devout manner, and by his own deep interest in the subject which he presents. Without this conviction of a divine mission, why should people gather to heareus? and how can

we hold their attention or reach their consciences? Another element was a clear conviction of the presence of the Unseen. The apostles had looked up to heaven as Jesus ascended. Angels spoke with them, and unlocked doors and gates. They had seen the tongues of fire. They lived partly in the Invisible. The Spirit which still dwells in the heart of the minister allies him to the Invisible. Its home is in the highest heavens; myriads of angels have been its unseen messengers; its constant tendency is to attract the human heart to the Unseen. The true minister feels that he is compassed with a cloud of witnesses; that they look upon him from the heavens above; that they are with him in his ministrations, and thus he lives as seeing Him who is invisible. This is faith in one of its manifestations—the evidence of things not seen. There is a beautiful legend of St. Chrysostom. He had been educated carefully, was a man of culture, and was devoted to his calling, yet in his earlier ministry he was not remarkable for success. At one time he had what seemed to be a vision. He thought he was in the pulpit. In the chancel and round about him were holy angels. In the midst of them, and directly before him, was the Lord Jesus; and he was to preach to the congregation assembled beyond. The vision or reverie deeply affected his spirit. The next day he ascended the pulpit; he felt the impression of the scene; he thought of the holy angels as if gathered around him; of the blessed

Saviour as directly before him, as listening to his words and beholding his spirit; he became intensely earnest, and from that time forward a wonderful power attended his ministration. Multitudes gathered round him wherever he preached. Though he had the simple name of John while he lived, the ages have called him Chrysostom, or the Golden Mouth.

Could we, as ministers, have ever with us this conviction—that close beside us in the pulpit and around us were holy angels, and that the blessed Saviour was ever before us looking upon us with those eyes of love that broke a Peter's heart, and listening for our words, and longing to have us say something that his own Spirit and power might bear with wings of fire to the hearts of the people—what an immense effect would it have on our ministrations? This blessed influence the Holy Spirit is ever exercising—taking the things of the Father and showing them to us, bringing to our remembrance the words of Christ, opening our eyes to behold wondrous things out his law, and revealing to us the personal presence of the blessed Saviour in all the omnipotence of his nature. It is this Spirit which, in moments of weakness, of darkness, and of loneliness, whispers to the soul, "Lo, I am with you alway."

Another element was the consciousness of divine assistance. The presence of the Invisible might overawe and overwhelm; but when that presence is revealed and manifested in the form of assistance,

what an immense power does it become! The heroes of old not unfrequently claimed to have the presence and assistance of their gods. Jupiter and Mars changed the destinies of battles. Æneas claimed to be the son of Venus, Alexander the son of Jupiter Ammon, and Cæsar claimed a divine mission and influence. His exclamation, "*Cesarem vehis*," to the trembling boatman inspired him with courage. The very thought of friends looking on becomes an assistance. The hero in the day of battle is nerved by the thought of home and friends and country. With what death-conquering energy will the husband and father meet the savage foe, seeking to destroy his home and to murder his wife and children! Alexander, when a young man entering on his career of conquest, said to his associates, "I seem to be standing where the eyes of the whole world are upon me." How feeble are these influences compared to the thought of the presence of God; and of the further thought, that his power not only protects and strengthens us, but may pass, through our instrumentality, to the hearts of the congregation. How inspiring that other thought, that we are not looking for God to assist us, so much as God is longing to use us for his own glory. He says, "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." It is the glory of the vine that its little twigs are laden with grapes. Christ is that vine, we are the branches and twigs; and how anxious he is that we may bring forth much fruit!

What limit can we set to the results to be accomplished, if so be the power of God works through us? The power that nerved the arm of a Samson to bear the gates of Gaza, and then to shake down the pillars of the edifice—the power that through the simple blowing of the rams' horns caused the walls of Jericho to fall; that opened a path through the Red Sea, and fed millions upon manna—that power, in all its majesty and might, is waiting to work through our words, our tongues, our eyes, and our very gestures, to reconcile the world unto God. How sad it is that some weak spot in the conductor limits the intensity and quantity of the divine electric stream!

This endowment of the Spirit, this holy baptism, has remained with the Church in all ages. With what power did the apostles give witness to the resurrection of Christ! How society was revolutionized, and the very customs of earth changed! Men in high places, as well as in low places, trembled at the preaching of Paul. Ephesus was in an uproar, and Athens was moved. They said at Thessalonica, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." I hear the apostle saying: "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place." How successful was the loving John in winning souls for his Master! and with what power did Peter preach while the Holy Ghost fell on them which heard! We know but little

about the earlier centuries, and yet the names of an illustrious few have been handed down to us, who shined like stars upon the darkness of the world. What power was given to Saint Ambrose! See the multitudes that gathered around Saint Chrysostom! How they hung on his lips! How eagerly did they wait on his ministration! Erasmus said of him: "I know not whether more to admire the indefatigableness of the man or of his hearers."

Under the preaching of Luther immense multitudes were swayed, and all northern Europe was agitated. Under the preaching of Wiclif, or, rather, the missionaries whom he sent out, England was, also, stirred to its depths. Knox, with his burning words, inflamed the mind of Scotland, as well as made its queen to tremble. It was said of him, that it seemed as if he would "ding the pulpit into blads, and fly oot o't." In the days following the Reformation multitudes gathered in the suburbs of Paris and of Antwerp to sing Christian songs and engage in religious services when no churches were open to them. They were dispersed and scattered only by such rivers of blood as flowed at the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day, or by such heaps of victims as were slaughtered by the Duke of Alva. The mountains of Piedmont, the city of Prague, the countries of Bohemia, Spain, France, and Belgium, were all scenes of intense religious power until the Inquisition, the fagot, and the sword put hundreds of thousands cruelly to death.

John Howe relates from Dr. Goodwin how he had heard Mr. Rogers preach on his lecture-day when his house was crowded, and such was the influence that "he put all the congregation in so strange a posture as he never saw any congregation in his life. The place was a mere Bochim, the people generally, as it were, deluged with their own tears; and he told me that he himself, when he got out, and was to take horse again to be gone, was fain to hang a quarter of an hour upon the neck of his horse, weeping, before he had power to mount, so strange was there an impression made upon him, and, generally, upon the people."

Livingstone in Scotland, when only twenty-seven years of age, was selected by his brethren to preach a Monday morning sermon after the communion at Shotts. He made every effort to be released, but, failing, spent the whole night in prayer and religious conversation, and then preached a sermon, under which, it is said, at least five hundred were awakened. He says: "I never preached ane sermon which I would be earnest to see wryte, but two: the one was on ane Monday after the communion at Shotts, and the other on ane Monday after the communion at Holywood; and both these times I had spent the whole night before in conference and prayer with some Christians without any more than ordinary preparation; otherwayes my gift was rather suited to simple, common people than to learned and judicious audi-

tors." But if Livingstone had, according to his wish, his sermons written, the power would not have appeared. Whitefield's sermons on paper are not remarkable. Nor is this strange, for the anatomist has never been able to find the life in a single animal or even in a single seed. Baxter was exceedingly successful in the ministry, and Ryle says of him: "He always spoke as one who saw God, and felt death at his back." Fletcher of Madeley frequently so electrified his audiences that some minutes passed before he could resume his sermons.

Look at the vast multitudes that attended the preaching of a Whitefield, and the longer continued ministrations of a Wesley. See how thoroughly society was stirred to its very foundation—how the colliers from their sooty pits listened with uplifted faces and streaming eyes to the words of life, and how the rabble on the common, though like wild beasts in their lawlessness, were tamed and sobered under their preaching. I heard Cardinal Manning say in a sermon in London, that had it not been for the preaching of John Wesley, no man could tell into how deep a degradation England would have sunk. Listen to the prayers and preaching of Calamy, and how the multitude was stirred. In our own country New England heard the voice of an Edwards, and was stirred to its center. What wonderful power, when the minister sitting behind him could no longer contain himself, but sprang to his feet, and, catching

him by the coat, said: "But O! Mr. Edwards, is not God a God of mercy?" and one of his auditors said that he fully expected to see the heavens open and the Judge descend. What wonderful revivals followed! Think of the ministry of Chalmers. It is said that Professor Young, who occupied the chair of Greek in the university, was on one occasion so electrified that he leaped up from his seat upon the bench near the pulpit, and stood breathless and motionless, gazing at the preacher till the burst was over, the tears all the while rolling down his cheeks." Dr. Wardlaw describes one scene he witnessed as follows: "It was a transcendently grand—a glorious burst. The energy of the doctor's action corresponded. Intense emotion beamed from his countenance. I cannot describe the appearance of his face better than by saying, as Foster said of Hall's, it was 'lighted up almost into a glare.' The congregation, in so far as the spell under which I was allowed me to observe them, were intensely excited, leaning forward in the pews like a forest bending under the power of the hurricane, looking steadfastly at the preacher, and listening in breathless wonderment. One young man, apparently, by his dress, a sailor, who sat in a pew before me, started to his feet, and stood till it was over. So soon as it was concluded there was, as invariably was the case at the close of the doctor's bursts, a deep sigh."

Look at Kentucky and Tennessee at the begin-

ning of this century ; and what wonderful phenomena occurred among Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists ! People gathered from ten to fifty miles to attend the meetings ; thousands were converted ; the most strange phenomena accompanied them ; and out of those assemblies camp-meetings have continued, and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was organized. See how Bishop Asbury and his coadjutors in Methodism passed over the mountains and valleys, and what extensive revivals prevailed. Look at Moody and Sankey in our own days, and see what thousands attended their ministrations, and how many hearts have been touched.

The attainment of this ministerial power should be the object of the most intense desire. I do not suppose that all may be equally robed with it. It is an attribute of divine sovereignty to give it to whomsoever he will, and in what measure he will. But when I remember that through this Spirit alone good can be accomplished, that God calls men to the ministry for the purpose of saving souls, that he is glorified by their success, that he has promised to be with them and in them, that he has promised that if they would ask they should receive, and has promised to fill them with his Spirit, I cannot but think there is a rich manifestation of the Spirit ready for every minister, that he may be thoroughly prepared for his glorious office.

What, then, shall he do that he may be the most

eminently successful? First, There should be an entire consecration of every moment of time and of every power of body and soul to the service of God. If we expect the divine Spirit to dwell in us, the heart should be made ready for his reception. Like the sacrifice of old, we, as living sacrifices, should be without spot and blemish. "Know ye not," saith the apostle, "that your bodies are temples of the Holy Ghost? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." That Spirit is to dwell with us and abide in us. Every faculty, every power, belongs wholly to God; and we, set apart for his service, have a grand and holy mission among men. Yet, as Jesus took upon him the form of a servant, and cared for the sorrows and miseries of the wretched, so, while our mission elevates, it does not separate us from the masses of men about us. We are to mingle with them, to love them, to enlighten and to save them.

Secondly, There must not only be consecration, but earnest prayer. It is God's pleasure to be entreated. Prayer is necessary, not only that we may receive, but that we may be in a condition to receive. We must first feel deeply the need of the Holy Spirit, that we may ask it. Seeing the responsibility laid upon us, the magnitude of the work, and our own insufficiency, and that there is no power adequate but that of the Holy Spirit, we pray for it; we wait, in earnest supplication. As the disciples waited the ten

days from the ascension to pentecost, so must we wait until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high; but we must wait as they waited, in the fulfillment of duty among the people of God, in the temple, worshiping, praising, and blessing God. We must wait expectantly, we must wait assuredly, not for any miraculous power, nor for conscious endowment, but with a full conviction that God will so take possession of our memory, reason, and imagination, of our strength and of our learning, that each and all of them, vitalized by his own power, shall be made to glow with such heat that they shall burn their way by the truth to the hearts and consciences of those who hear us.

Thirdly, To intense prayer must be added fasting. If I am asked how fasting can bring spiritual power, I cannot answer satisfactorily. I simply know that Jesus hath said: "This sort cometh not out but by prayer and fasting." He had given his disciples power over unclean spirits, yet there was one brought to them which they could not cast out. It reigned only in the more fury because of their efforts, and when Jesus came the sorrowing father applied to him. One word was sufficient, and the unclean spirit fled. The bewildered disciples asked the Master why they could not cast him out, and received the answer I have quoted. This implies different degrees of spiritual power—power sufficient to reach some hearts, but not all. But who that loves his

Master does not covet a power sufficient to rescue the vilest of the vile, and to bring the strongest offender to the foot of the cross. While I cannot tell how the fasting operates, I can see that it is both a sign of deep feeling, and that it adds to its intensity. Who has not felt a sorrow that made him for the time regardless of food? Who has not been so absorbed that he has forgotten the hours, and passed beyond the time of his meals? With a dear one on the bed of death, how tasteless and valueless is food! So, if there be an intensity of prayer that absorbs the soul, we become like Him who said, "I have meat to eat ye know not of;" and again, "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me."

Again, it adds to the intensity of purpose. The men who sought the life of Paul bound themselves with an oath that they would neither eat nor drink till they had slain him. This marks the intensity of their purpose. When David prayed for the life of his child he took no meat until they brought him news that the child was dead. He would have but one desire. He would do but one thing. So the minister is so anxious to receive spiritual power, so anxious to rescue souls from ruin, so anxious to build the Church of Christ, that sometimes he has little relish for his food; and at other times, such is the cry of his soul, that he resolves to take no meat until his prayer prevails with God. This intense desire thus marked fits the soul for holy action, for sublime

purposes. Its whole power has become concentrated on one thing. Then as the ball, when the rifle has been pointed steadily at the mark, strikes to its center, so the minister, having but one aim, his whole soul absorbed on one point, finds his words going directly to the hearts of his hearers. How wonderful the example of Christ! Pure and spotless, he needed no prayer for himself. He prayed for others, for us, for the world. He continued whole nights in prayer while loving disciples yielded to sleep; he prayed for others, as they would not pray for themselves. He needed no fasting for himself, yet see him fasting forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. After it the angels came and ministered unto him, and he came out of the wilderness to heal the sick and to raise the dead. All night in prayer he was transfigured, and Moses and Elias came down to earth to talk with him in the presence of his disciples of the decease he should accomplish in Jerusalem. Moses, with God on the mountain, came down with a shining face—shining so brightly with unconscious power that the people could not gaze upon him until he was veiled. So the minister, coming out of his closet, through his seasons of fasting and prayer, is gifted with words which pierce to the hearts of the people; and sometimes it seems as if his countenance shone like the face of Stephen, who, gazing up into heaven, was illumined by a ray from the throne.

This Spirit, also, brings before us the most solemn

thoughts in reference to our congregations. Immortal souls come to listen for tidings of the Saviour. God has stirred them by his Holy Spirit, and sent them to hear. If they are saved it must be through our words, and upon the issue of the sermon the destiny of immortal souls may be sealed. Who could preach carelessly could he thus feel? Besides, it may be the last sermon which some one shall hear. Almost every sermon is the last that some one does hear. More persons die every week than there are pulpits in the land. Could we single out some person in the assembly who would never hear another sermon, how would we try to preach Jesus? Our eyes are sealed as to destiny, but that person is in the congregation, and we must draw the bow at a venture, trusting that the divine arm and eye will give to the bow sufficient tension, and to the arrow the right direction. When I have heard, as I frequently have, of persons present in assemblies where I have preached, who have been called suddenly away by accidents or disease, I have never felt to regret that my sermon was not more beautiful or more polished, but I have regretted that it was not preached with more demonstration of the Spirit and of power. I cannot conceal my conviction, that but for the negligence and indolence of those of us who occupy the sacred desk, this demonstration would be more universal and more powerful. It seems to me that the possibilities connected with preaching have

been only partially realized, and that a brighter and more glorious day will dawn upon the Church. If there is one thing above all others that I have desired for myself, and that above all other things I covet for you, it is this ministerial power, this baptism of fire. Seek for this more than for learning, for wisdom, for oratory; and, above all, more than for any thought of your acceptability or popularity. To preach one sermon like Livingstone's would be worth a life of service. I believe you all may have such power that thousands shall be converted under your preaching. If the Bible be true, and if you are divinely called to the ministry, you are lifted out of the common circles of business and of the conflicts of life. God comes to dwell in you, and to use all your powers for himself; your highest glory will be to appear as living, walking Christs among men, and you will feel with the apostle, "For me to live is Christ."

LECTURE VIII.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PASTORATE ON THE PULPIT.

THE pulpit is not the only sphere of the preacher's power. There are other spheres which are intimately associated with it. The minister is a pastor as well as a preacher. He both feeds and cares for his flock. He not only leads them to pastures green and nourishing, but guards them against prowling beasts of prey that thirst for their blood, as well as against precipices and morasses, where they might receive fatal injury. As a preacher, he speaks to the people collectively; but as a pastor he watches over them individually. By careful observation he learns their religious condition, their past advancement, the difficulties which they encounter, the hopes and fears which influence their lives, and is prepared to furnish them the truth which they need. Thus, too, the sermons which he delivers to the whole congregation become a source of spiritual power to each individual.

These two classes of work are so intimately associated that it is impossible perfectly to separate them. The preacher cannot reap the full harvest of his labors without being the diligent pastor, and the pas-

tor can accomplish but little without the truth and power of the pulpit. Pastoral duties are enjoined by the direct command of Christ, and are illustrated in his own glorious example. Their character is, also, exemplified in the labors of the apostles, as they taught the people from house to house, or warned them day and night with tears. I do not propose to discuss the duties of the pastorate, though the field is a very wide and fruitful one. I purpose only to notice the influence which pastoral duties exercise upon the pulpit, in giving to the preacher the knowledge essential to his work, and enabling him to trace the progress of that work, as it may appear from time to time under his labors; and, also, in preparing the congregation to be more profited by bringing them into friendship and sympathy with the minister.

One form of this work is preaching outside of the regular pulpit. The parable of the supper was designed to instruct the disciples to go out into the highways and hedges and to compel the people to come in. We are not only to preach to those who are so anxious to hear us that they will crowd to the churches and aid in supporting the Gospel, but we are to go forth to seek for those who will not attend the churches. The Saviour preached the Gospel on the mountain-side, or from a boat on the sea of Galilee. He addressed his disciples as they journeyed to and fro, or rested by the way-side. He preached one of his sublimest sermons to a single hearer, the woman

of Samaria, as he sat by Jacob's well; and his rich promise was given to the dying thief who was crucified at his side. He gave his benediction at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, spoke words of life at the death-bed of the damsel to comfort sorrowing parents, touched the bier and restored the son to his widowed mother, called a brother back from the tomb to wipe away the tears of weeping sisters, and in his tenderness, in the midst of his sermon, he took little children in his arms and blessed them. He was the preacher and the Saviour every-where. The great apostle of the Gentiles, in his work, imitated his Master. He preached in the Jewish synagogue, disputed in the school of Tyrannus, proclaimed the Gospel on Mars' Hill, delivered sermons by the sea-side, spake in an upper room through the late hours of the night, and warned the people not only publicly, but from house to house. These examples point out the path of duty, and teach us not to confine our ministrations to the sacred edifice. The ultimate design of preaching is not merely the utterance of the truth so as to reach the understanding and to stir the emotions and affections, but "to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." This work is so vast, it cannot be accomplished merely by sermons in the pulpit; they must be supplemented by personal visiting, conversation, and effort with each individual.

This pastoral visiting is essential to the preacher, in order that he may learn the condition and wants

of his congregation. Without this knowledge there will be little directness in his sermons, and they will be comparatively profitless to his people. In his office of teacher, before he can instruct wisely and well, he must learn what his hearers already know. That he is a teacher and messenger of divine things not only does not release him from his duty, but rather intensifies his responsibility in it. The professor in college may understand the higher functions in algebra, but it would be simple folly to lecture upon them to those who had not learned the first principles of arithmetic, or to discuss the peculiar properties of the sections of the cone to those who had not studied the elements of geometry. The professors in every college, the teachers of every science, examine their students before they admit them to recitation in the various departments, that instruction may be given according to their individual advancement. If this be necessary in acquiring elements of knowledge, which, though important, are not vital, and without which a man may live and be both useful and happy, how much more important is it in acquiring that knowledge which is essential to his happiness here and hereafter? To one unacquainted with Christian congregations and with Christian instruction it must be a perfect marvel how one discourse can suit a congregation composed of all grades of ages, talents, acquirements, and accomplishments, and by one who knows the condition of scarcely a person in the audience. The

possibility of such teaching is found only in the universal application of the elementary truths of the Gospel to every human heart.

The settled pastor who has served his congregation for many years, who has baptized and married a generation, who has buried friends and parents, may be supposed to have a general knowledge of the condition of his audience; yet this acquaintance extends chiefly to external circumstances. Without personal visiting and frequent conversation with individuals he cannot know the workings of their minds, the presence and pressure of disturbing doubts, the strength of severe temptations, the rapid currents which they are trying to stem, and the help of which they are constantly in need. Besides this, additions are made to every congregation by immigration, by marriages, or by changes in business; young hearts are expanding, which have longings for the invisible and eternal, which are not yet made known even to the pastor who baptized them. These changes, together with the influence of pernicious publications and strange ideas, which enter every dwelling and may find way to every heart, require constant vigilance on the part of the oldest and most careful pastor. The young pastor, though he may expect to remain settled, is a stranger to the religious condition of his audience. How can he become acquainted with it, so as to form his sermons properly, except by personal visiting and conversation? In an itiner-

ant ministry, such as that connected with the Church of which I am a member, the difficulty of knowing the congregations is increased. The preacher passing from year to year, or every few years, to different localities, must necessarily be unacquainted with his people, and must at first be at a loss for topics. I doubt whether an itinerant ministry could be highly successful without the aid of assistants who are acquainted with the congregation. To secure this help class-meetings have proved of immense value. A small number meet together each week for prayer and religious conversation. The leader, who conducts these services, becomes thoroughly acquainted with every member. Under the order of the Church these leaders are expected to meet the minister every week, and it is the minister's duty to visit the various classes as frequently as practicable. This arrangement serves to promote personal acquaintance among the various members, and to furnish a mode by which the ministers can quickly meet with all their members. By it pastoral assistance can, also, be furnished to the preacher. Valuable as these meetings are to an itinerant ministry, they do not prevent the necessity of direct personal visits from house to house. It is only in such a way, whether the pastorate be temporary or prolonged, that the member can enjoy a full and earnest conversation with his pastor, can tell him of the doubts which trouble him, and of the peculiar trials and difficulties that meet and sur-

round him. If the pastor becomes thoroughly acquainted with the religious condition of his people, their pursuits and employments, their afflictions and temptations, he will be able, for their edification, to "bring forth out of his treasury things both new and old." Nor should pastoral visiting, in this view, be confined merely to the members of the Church. The preacher should mingle freely with the members of his congregation, and should, also, visit those who occasionally attend his ministry. He may thus learn their views or their objections. He can ascertain what stumbling-blocks lie in their way, and what it is that keeps them from embracing the Saviour and from fellowship with his Church. He will sometimes find phases of skepticism that seem to envelop the whole community, as the atmosphere encircles the earth. At other times he will find, running through families and business associations, tracks of local storms that have prostrated every thing in their way, and left ruined branches and trunks scattered around. To labor successfully, to remove skepticism, to heal difficulties, to bring communities into unity and love, he must mingle with the people, and they must feel that he takes a deep interest in them. Then will he be able skillfully to select his topics, and break to his people the bread of life.

Again, the minister needs to visit his people to gain their sympathy and good-will. Quintilian says that the first requisite for an orator is to gain the

good-will of his audience. We all know how much more readily children learn when they love their teachers, and how little benefit they receive when they dislike them. The minister beloved by his congregation has a key to their affections. They listen with delight, and find pleasure and instruction in all his ministrations. But if the minister be an object of aversion, his words are without power to the hearts of his hearers. To gain the good-will of his audience there is no method more effectual than to manifest an interest in them and their families. The preacher who has a cheerful word for the man of business when he meets him—who calls to visit the family, especially in times of affliction—who has a kind word for every child—soon acquires such an influence over those families as to make them attentive and interested hearers. This visiting should be so thorough that the names of all the congregation, and, as far as practicable, the names of the children, should be carefully learned. The good Shepherd "calleth his sheep by name," is the language of the blessed Saviour. It gratifies children especially to be addressed by their names; they feel that the man who does so takes an interest in them; and the older ones among us would prefer to be called by our own names, rather than to be addressed as Mr. Jones or Mr. Smith.

Again, pastoral visiting furnishes the preacher an opportunity to learn the influence of his sermons,

and to ascertain accurately the effects which they have produced. Thus he will receive suggestions which may be of future service. If, in visiting the man of business, he finds that the influence of his last Sabbath's sermon lingers in his office, counting-room, shop, or on his farm, as a hallowed influence to cheer him in his work and to raise his heart heavenward, he should thank God that he was enabled to deliver such a message, and should study how he may secure other trains of thought equally profitable. If, in visiting the sick, he finds that his words of comfort have been treasured in their memory, and have been a benediction in their seasons of darkness and sorrow, he will rejoice in his ministry of consolation, and will apply himself to find fresh lessons of encouragement in the word of God. But should he find that his sermons have not been treasured, that the people refer to no thoughts of comfort or consolation; if the old are without cheer, and the young are disposed to wander away, he has serious cause to inquire whether he should not change his style of preaching. He should consider whether he has carefully selected important truths in view of their condition, whether his address has been direct and earnest, whether he has endeavored to make his congregation feel that he spoke to them because God had given him a message. Should he find that some of his sermons have been misunderstood, it will furnish him an occasion to explain, and he will either correct

the misapprehension in a familiar conversation, or it will furnish him an occasion for a more full discussion in the pulpit. He may possibly find that in presenting certain doctrines, or in urging to certain duties, he has so stated them that to some of his people they seem to conflict with other doctrines or with other duties. From these cases he will learn how to be more guarded in definition, and to discriminate more carefully in all his utterances. Another advantage will be afforded by ascertaining what class of topics has been most successful in reaching peculiar minds. They will tell him of sermons which they heard in former years, and of the deep impressions they received; they will speak of the preciousness of certain texts of Scripture, and of how much comfort they have derived from them. Oftentimes a ray of light is thrown upon some passage of Scripture to which his attention had never been given, or the connection of which with religious experience he had never fully perceived. Sometimes these turns of thought, learned in the cottage or the cabin, will open up a wonderful vista of scriptural truth, looking through which he finds much that is beneficial to his own heart and to the hearts of his hearers. Sometimes in my own experience a passage was so quoted that it seemed altogether new. For a moment I doubted whether it was in the Bible. But, on reflection, I found that I had connected it with some other train of thought, seeing only one side of the crystal,

when others equally beautiful had been concealed from view. Many a text have I thus found for my Sabbath sermons as I visited the garrets and cellars of cities, or the abodes of the poor scattered through the country I remember, in my early ministry, accompanying a Christian lady to a poor dwelling, where we found an old negro woman lying on a little straw upon the floor, and death was evidently approaching; yet she talked so sweetly of the love of Jesus, so patiently as to her sufferings, with such resignation to her condition, and with hopes almost of ecstasy of her future, that my heart was deeply touched. It was not only a lesson to me personally, but I think the influence of it was felt in my sermons for several weeks.

Again, the work of the true preacher is to warn every man, to teach every man in all wisdom, and to present every man perfect before God. To accomplish this he must watch the progress of his work; he must add line upon line, and precept upon precept. The farmer does not sow the seed, and then pay no further attention to the field. If the crop is growing, he will love to look at it—to see it is properly inclosed and protected; to give additional culture where necessary, or to remove weeds; and he will look forward with interest and with earnest expectation to the harvest, when the ripened fruit may be gathered and preserved. So the preacher who is sent of God will love to trace the growth of the

spiritual work under his care. He saw last Sabbath the tear starting in the eye, or the bowed head, and he knew the Spirit of God was writing lessons upon a receptive heart. He longs to see that hearer, and to converse with him personally and closely on religious topics, to remove his difficulties, and to lead him nearer to the Saviour. So he will follow up every indication of spiritual influence which he notices in his congregation; and if he perceives that some are hardened and careless, he will be anxious to converse with them, to learn their governing motives, and how their hearts and consciences can be reached, for there is some avenue to every human heart. There is grace which enlightens every man that cometh into the world, and a measure of the Spirit is given to lead every one to the Saviour. The faithful pastor will find that avenue, however guarded; will co-operate with those movings of the Spirit, and will find some truth which will touch the conscience. Sometimes he will find that some of his congregation are wandering into sin, that evil influences are alluring young men to evil habits. He will anxiously seek some plan by which these wanderers may be brought nearer to the Church, and be saved from ruin. As the shepherd who spends with his flock the long days of summer, and who guards them by night from the attacks of wild animals, learns to know and love each member of his flock—and if he misses one, hies him away to the mountains to recover it; so the

true minister yearns over and watches every member of his congregation. God has made him a shepherd, to care for his flock; a watchman, to guard them against danger. Last summer I spent several months on the vast mountains and plains that lie between us and the Pacific Ocean. I frequently watched the shepherds with their immense flocks, and marked their constant diligence and care. I saw the herders, who guarded thousands of cattle on the vast ranches, or the almost interminable plains, and was surprised to observe the constant vigilance which they exercised. The herder was always in the saddle; his eyes were on the cattle. If one wandered toward a precipice, or was becoming separated from the herd, so that it was liable to be destroyed, it was immediately followed with earnestness and brought back to safety. How much more responsible is the office of the Christian pastor! If he expects to gain the affections of all the members of his congregation, if he desires to realize the full fruit of his sermons, his eye must be upon them, and he must exercise over them a sleepless vigilance.

By this care he will, also, become informed of the relative ability and fitness of the members of the congregation for such work as he may need in carrying out his various plans of Church activity. He will, also, thus gain increasing influence over the hearts of the children. Much of the sermon is necessarily beyond their comprehension. Not being interested,

Church services are wearisome; and if they attend, it is rather a matter of form. The preacher is too frequently a stranger to them—seems to overlook them—has no word addressed directly to them. Being without interest in the services, they sometimes imbibe toward the sanctuary, and even toward the Sabbath, an aversion which tinges and influences their whole lives. But if children feel that the preacher is their friend, if he has a kind word for them when he visits in the family, if he speaks to them by name when he meets them on the street, if he takes an interest in their studies, inquires as to their progress, and drops a word of encouragement now and then, they will love to attend the services. Delighted to meet him, they will listen to his voice, and his pulpit ministrations will become to them a blessing. Their presence will, also, be an inspiration to him. As he looks into their bright eyes and expectant countenances, as he beholds their opening spirits yearning for truth and looking out into the invisible and eternal, he will be anxious to speak some word that shall draw them early to a loving Saviour. He will think of them in his study when he is preparing his sermons; he will think of them when he bows his knees in secret and implores a blessing on his congregation. While he prepares to feed the sheep, he will think, also, of the little lambs. His sermons will be more simple in their style, more brief and pointed in their sentences, and some incident will be skillful-

ly interwoven which will touch the heart of a child. That simplicity, that illustration, will, also, touch the hearts of those who are older. Indeed, there is no way by which the good-will of mothers can be so readily gained as by kindness to their children, and especially that form of kindness which manifests a deep anxiety for their mental and moral excellence. Fathers, also, will share in this good-will, and as the shepherd makes the older members of the flock to follow when he takes up a little lamb and walks away, so the preacher who wins the heart of childhood finds the parents drawn to his church, and listening with profit to his ministry. The story of Themistocles is well known. He said of his little boy: "This child is greater than any man in Greece: for the Athenians command the Greeks, I command the Athenians, his mother commands me, and he commands his mother."*

Notwithstanding the manifest benefits resulting from pastoral work, there are preachers who have a great distaste for its duties. They think they need the time for their studies. They are timid about visiting families, and they think that the association, in many instances, would be both unpleasant and unprofitable. Such preachers are greatly mistaken as to the elements which they specially need. Pastoral visiting furnishes just that supplement to the library which the successful preacher absolutely requires.

* Plutarch's Lives.

In his books he gains a knowledge of subjects, he acquires abstract thought, he dwells in an intellectual realm of enchanting beauty, he has around him the best products of the grandest minds which have graced our earth. No wonder it is that he desires to spend the largest portion of his time in such fellowship and communion. Yet he needs not only great thoughts, but to learn how to apply them to humanity in all the walks of life. He lives in an intellectual world; his thoughts are of the past, his visions of the future; he does not come into contact with the harassing cares and thoughts which agitate the bosom of working men. As Christ came down from heaven and walked among men that he might do them good, so must the minister come out of his study, away from the communion with minds almost angelic, and walk in the common paths of life. This is not only a duty, but it is an essential requisite to the highest ministerial success. He must be a man among men to gain their affections, to share in their sympathies. He must walk with them side by side; he must let them feel the throbbings of a brother's heart; he must take their hands in his; he must take, to some extent, on his heart their burdens and sorrows and cares; his humanity will be improved and enlarged; he will speak with a sympathy, tenderness, and love unknown before; the deep feeling which he acquires in contact with the people will touch the very tones of his voice and make them

sympathetic, and the poorest in his congregation will feel that his words of sympathy and encouragement are meant for them.

Nor should the minister hesitate to visit because he is timid. That very timidity gives a crowning grace to his work. His people will feel that he comes to them, not because he delights in the mere work of visiting, but because he feels that he is sent from God to do them good. He comes to them as an angel who descends from the spirit-world having a message to communicate, who breathes a heavenly atmosphere, and is ready to wing his way back to the heavenly courts. His spirit will be one of tenderness and love; his conversation pure and instructive; his movements in the family kind and elevated. Alike free from low familiarity and haughty reserve, his conversation will tend toward the point for which he came. He will, indeed, speak kindly, inquire for their health, sympathize with their afflictions, share in their cares; but he comes to represent his Saviour, and to drop some word which shall stimulate to duty, and which shall inspire a higher spirituality. In the spirit of his Master he will be in an atmosphere of prayer. He has visited because it was his duty, and he had the promise that his Master would be with him; and, ere he leaves, the supplications which he utters, the words which he drops, the spirit which he manifests, are a benediction to the family. Yes, a benediction to himself, for he leaves such a

place more like Christ than when he entered. Nor must these visits be confined to the wealthy and the educated. The poor and the ignorant need more help than those who are educated and prosperous. If there be prisons, poor-houses, and hospitals within your sphere, neglect not them. The great Head of the Church puts himself in the place of the weakest of his followers, and says: "I was sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not;" and when the wondering heart asks how and when, the answer comes, "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me." Or if the visit is paid, if the hunger or thirst is assuaged, if the naked are clothed, and the strangers cared for, how sweet the accent, "Inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these, ye did it unto me." I shall never forget how vividly this passage came to my mind as an illustration of human feeling, when, years since, I was traveling in Eastern lands. I was in feeble health, and thought it doubtful whether I ever should see my family again. I received a letter narrating an act of kindness which had been performed by a friend for my youngest child, a little girl: in a moment my heart leaped across the sea and over the mountains, and in grateful recognition I said in my thoughts to my loving friend, "Inasmuch as you did it to the least of these, you did it unto me." It was to me more precious, when done in my absence to my little child, than had it been done when present

for myself. A sweet charm has rested in my mind on those words ever since. It seems to me that Jesus is better pleased with a cup of cold water given to a disciple in the name of a disciple, than he was when the woman of Samaria gave to his weary lips the draught from Jacob's well.

If any of you, young gentlemen, are troubled with timidity, and think you cannot visit because you are timid, let me say, for your encouragement, that I think I was as timid as you can possibly be. When coming to the years of a young man it was a positive pain for me to visit the houses even of friends. Many a time I walked by the door of a neighbor's house when I went on an errand, waiting five or ten minutes for some one to come to the door, rather than to knock and enter in. So bashful was I that many a time I walked around a square rather than to meet a young lady whom I saw coming on the street. I had much of this timidity when I entered the ministry; and with nervous influence the palms of my hands seemed to burn at the very thought of going out to visit. But I felt I must go; the Church bade me go; I had promised God I would go, and as the soldier in the army walks forward timidly, yet determinedly, into the thickest of the fight, so I went in my Master's name. If I could, I took with me some experienced Christian, especially into strange houses, and into poor and vicious localities. I spake to the poor kindly, drew

out of them their religious education and experience, found many a wandering one, and tried to comfort many a sorrowing heart. Such visits made me better, taught me to feel for the people, and to break with more tenderness to them the bread of life. In a revival which followed, out of nearly three hundred who came to the altar of prayer, there were very few with whom I had not previously conversed, and I knew how to enter into their sympathies and to point them to the Lamb of God.

Nor will this visiting, if systematically performed, interfere with a proper amount of study. After the morning has been devoted to close thought the minister needs recreation. His walking to and fro, his climbing stairs into garrets and descending into cellars, his walking into the suburbs of villages or riding into country places, to talk of Jesus and to instruct the young, will furnish recreation as invigoration to health, and as little interfering with his studies, as the amusements in which so many spend their leisure hours. Indeed, so far from being a loss intellectually, the opportunity to apply a portion of Scripture we have been studying, to unfold some promise on which we have dwelt, makes us see more clearly the truth we wish to portray, and enables us the better to prepare for the sermon of the following Sabbath. The true teacher is frequently benefited by the lesson which he imparts, even more than the learner.

It does not fall within my purpose to enumerate the various modes in which this work may be performed, or to dwell on the specific lessons which should be given; but I may say that all coarseness, vulgarity, and low expressions should be strictly avoided. There should be cheerfulness and social feeling, but no undue familiarity. We enter the houses of friends because we are indorsed by the Church; the office of minister gains us invitations where we are personally but little known. We go in the character of Christian gentlemen, and of holy men of God. If we do not so conduct ourselves we violate propriety, disappoint our friends, and bring reproach upon the ministry and the Church. Every family should feel when we leave that a servant of the Lord Jesus has been among them, and some influence should remain which will make religion appear more beautiful and heavenly.

It is particularly, however, in its reflex influence on the pulpit, that we consider this subject. Without such visiting the sermons are likely to become essays or orations—full of thought and of learning, but not specially directed to the benefit of the audience. To give his sermon directness of aim and to strike the heart, the minister must be a student of human nature. He needs to mingle with society in all its forms, and to understand its various necessities. He must learn the sources of sorrow and joy, of hope and fear, that arise in the daily walks of life.

It is true, he may get glimpses of human nature from distinguished writers—characters beautifully portrayed by the pen of Shakspeare; he may note the workings of the human mind as developed in mental philosophy; but his allusions to these will be like sparkling gems which here and there adorn his exercises. What the congregation needs is the pouring forth of a heart which is filled with sympathy for their peculiar necessities, and in their peculiar circumstances.

There are, however, some ministers to whom pastoral visiting is not of great service. They have been accustomed to mingle with the people; they enjoy society, shake hands with every one they meet, and are at home every-where. Such men need their books more than they need society. They are loving, earnest, pleasant preachers, but are seldom profound and solid thinkers. Their congregations love to meet them, but they think more of their conversations at the fireside than they do of their work in the pulpit. Such ministers may be met at almost every funeral, and have time to go to the cemetery, even if it be three or four miles distant. They attend every festival in the different churches, mingle in all gatherings, know every body, and learn every thing except how to honor their Master and his cause in their public sermons. Sometimes young men who aspire for nobler things, who behold a radiant glory in gospel truth, and have a longing desire to unfold it, are

repelled from visiting by the superficial character of the pulpit exercises of this class of men. Yet they should remember that these men do but little of true pastoral work. They call familiarly in various families, and join in jokes and laughter, sit down in a circle to smoke cigars, are ready to join in any recreation or amusement, and leave without a word spoken for Jesus, or a prayer offered in behalf of the family. Seldom is such a man found in the cabins of the poor, by the bedside of the sick, or in close sympathetic conference with the prodigal young man who is breaking the heart of his father and mother, and is wandering into the depths of sin. Seldom is he found pleading with such a one to reform his life and to turn to his Saviour. Seldom is he found in earnest conversation, endeavoring to bring heavenly consolation to the heart of the suffering widow, or to drop a word of instruction and comfort to the orphan child. Seldom is he found visiting the man of business who is in deep embarrassment and distress, and whose heart is wrung with agony under the pressure of difficulties and responsibilities. As the result of long observation, I am satisfied that those who are the closest students, and are by nature the most timid, become the best pastors when they conquer themselves and instruct the people from house to house: for they go, not to spend the moments in trivial conversation, but they go under the conviction that Christ has sent them as his servants,

and in his stead to bear his benediction to the household. Their words are not words of mere compliment, but of light and joy drawn from the Holy Scriptures. They tell of the wonderful love of Christ, and the exhaustless store of spiritual riches in reserve for those who love him. Their touch is as the helping hands of brothers who lift up the lowly, the discouraged, and the sorrowing.

What had the life of Jesus been to us, if we had only the record of his sermons, without the record of his going about doing good? We listen to his words as voices from above, but our hearts draw closer to him when we see him opening the eyes of the blind, and stooping to touch the leper, who, in his degradation, is loathed by society. It is the heavens kissing the earth; it is God in contact with the human soul. In such a record Jesus becomes Emmanuel, God with us. I think the every-day life of Jesus touches the human heart more than the great truths which he uttered. Both were necessary. Without truth, the human soul would not have been elevated; without the corresponding life, that truth would not have borne such rich fruitage. If the young preacher desires to be a true successor of the apostles, let him imitate the plans and the work of Jesus, and let him follow the apostles as they followed their glorious Master.

You will not fancy, I know, that I underrate the value of close study and the acquisition of all possi-

ble knowledge that may assist the minister. But when I take the New Testament in my hands, I find the Saviour and his apostles teaching the people, visiting the sick, healing the wretched, comforting the sorrowing, and being much in prayer; but I find not a single direction how to write a sermon or to read it, or how to manage the voice and the gestures so as to be accounted an eloquent orator. They had the truth by direct inspiration; we must study to attain it. But, with that truth given, they seem to have thought of nothing but going forth, burning, shining, blazing, in all the glory of a Gospel, of glad tidings, and without one thought of appearance or manner, simply presenting the truth so as to touch the hearts and consciences of the people. As Christ and his apostles did not dwell at all upon what occupies the minds of so many young ministers, so I fear that many think but little of what burned in the hearts of Christ and his apostles.

There are a few large Churches where the congregations are so immense and the membership is so numerous that it seems impossible for the pastor to know his people. Such is Spurgeon's, with his five thousand membership, and such are a few large congregations in our principal cities. The pastoral work in such cases is performed by assistants employed by the pastor or the congregations. There are some young men who feel so conscious of their superior power, who have such a premonition of

coming greatness, that, imitating the example of these distinguished ministers, they resolve to devote themselves to their study and to preaching, and to spend their life in something more noble than visiting the people. Such young men should remember that these eminent ministers began either in country places or with small congregations. So far as I am acquainted with men who have built these mammoth institutions, they began at the bottom of the ladder; they mingled with the common people, studied the common people, preached to the common people, and in this way gained that knowledge of human nature which enabled them to draw immense congregations around them. As well might the young merchant, without experience or capital, expect at once to have the marble palace of A. T. Stewart, as the young minister the congregation of a Spurgeon or a Beecher. They began at the bottom of the ladder in a country place, and climbed up. The young man who begins at the top of the ladder invariably climbs down.

LECTURE IX.

COLLATERAL AND MISCELLANEOUS WORK.

THE range of a preacher's work is widely extended. His chief labor is in the pulpit, and in pastoral visiting among the members. There are, however, many collateral fields which he must cultivate, some of which are essential to the stability and growth of his congregation. Closely connected with preaching is the offering of public prayer. This service should be conducted with that reverence which indicates the deep piety of the minister, and which may inspire the people with solemnity and devotion. Prayer should issue from a heart which feels its own wants, and which is in sympathy with the wants of the congregation. In this service thanksgiving should ever occupy a prominent place, because of the multitude of mercies received, both personally and as a congregation, and because the spirit of thanksgiving is always appropriate. People should frequently be reminded of the blessings which they so constantly enjoy, because there is such a tendency to murmur and complain at the lot which they occupy. Among the Jews sacrifices of thanksgiving were required under the law;

and the psalmist frequently exhorts to come before God with thanksgiving. In the New Testament we are taught, "with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." There should, also, be the confession of sins, personal, social, and national; the deprecation of God's wrath; the prayer for pardon through the atoning merits of Christ, and the expression of trust in the willingness and power of the great Father to bless and save.

Prayer should be offered in such a devotional spirit that the people shall feel that the minister is conscious of the presence of the great Jehovah, and that the Holy Spirit is already communicating with his heart. No words indicating lack of reverence, no expressions of familiarity, no real address to the people under the garb of prayer, should be employed; and even the name of the Deity should be so uttered as to indicate the solemn awe with which even a redeemed spirit should approach the throne. The preacher's evident access to the mercy-seat inspires the hearts of the people. He utters petitions for what his own heart needs; and while he prays for himself many an aching heart is comforted under the power of his pathetic, fervent prayer. He also enters into the sympathies of the people, and in their name, and as in their places, pours out earnest supplications for needed mercy. This spirit of prayer prepares the hearts of the people for the reception of the word. As the minister prays in

the consciousness of his own weakness for divine help; as he pleads for the presence and power of the great Head of the Church; as he prays that the people may receive the truth which he is about to utter, and that the Holy Spirit by his sacred influences may rest upon every one, this spirit of prayer descends, also, upon the congregation. Thus brought as into the immediate presence of God, they, too, look for the purifying influences of the blessed Spirit, and their hearts are brought into sympathy with the speaker. To some extent they feel the pressure of his great thoughts; the burden which lies on his heart is in part transferred to them; they spend the hour in worship, in the beauty of holiness; and much of the profit of the service comes from the hallowing influence of the prayer which has been offered.

That the minister may have the true spirit of prayer in the pulpit he will need to cultivate secret prayer, also. It is in his closet the divine power is gained which manifests itself in the midst of public duties. Our Saviour says: "When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." In harmony with this is the beautiful language of the psalmist: "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High, shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." The closet of the Christian be-

comes thus allied to the holy of holies in the temple. Thither the high-priest passed once a year, and was for a moment as under the wings of the cherubim, and face to face with the divine Shekinah. But the Christian in the holy service of secret prayer abides under that shadow, while the divine Shekinah ever illumines and warms his heart. Then are realized the promises which are made to him who makes the Most High "his habitation." The length of the prayer may, very properly, vary with the spirit of the preacher and the circumstances of the congregation. But, as a general rule, I doubt whether extemporaneous prayer should exceed ten, or, at the utmost, fifteen, minutes, as the people are liable to become wearied, and then the spirit of devotion is weakened.

In conducting meetings for social prayer the tact and skill of the preacher find a wide field. This service, as in distinction from the Sabbath service, is designed for the whole Church, and the minister should not occupy an undue proportion. Some ministers kill their prayer-meetings by their long prayers, reading long chapters, and giving long exhortations. They should remember that the people are benefited by taking part, and that as many as possible should be induced to join in these social services. The more who speak or pray, the better is it for the growth of the Church and for the development of the moral power of the congregation. In this way,

also, the minister may best learn the religious condition of his people. Especially should the young convert be encouraged to speak and pray. In New Testament times the Holy Spirit fell upon the people, and the gift of tongues was for the young convert as well as for the old. If children did not learn to speak in early childhood, the tongue would be clumsy all through life. So should the young Christian be encouraged to join at once in the social services of the congregation; as in the family the old and middle-aged and children freely mingle together, so should it be in the Church of God. Nor should the minister go to his prayer-meeting without preparation. Let him have some topic on which his thoughts will be arranged and condensed. Let him select something which will call forth the sympathy, inspire the prayers, or increase the activities of his people. Commencing promptly at the moment, let his own services be spirited and brief, and then let him guide the current of the congregation. Brief prayers, interspersed with a few verses of Christian song, and such utterances as the members may wish to make, under the teaching and example of the pastor, may profitably occupy the evening hour. Under some ministers the prayer-meeting is the glory of the Church, and a large part of the congregation attends. Under others interest diminishes, and scarcely as many attend as are necessary to conduct the services.

The Sunday-school should always receive the careful attention of the minister. He should teach the Church that the school is a part of its legitimate work, and under its careful control—not a something outside of the Church, but a regular part of its Sabbath services. Wherever Churches are regularly established, I have no sympathy with what are termed union schools, or institutions without specific religious management and government. In sparsely settled sections of country, where no denomination is strong enough to maintain a school, or in neighborhoods where no Church is organized, such schools may be of great profit, and should be encouraged; but wherever a Church is organized the children of the Church should be taught by the Church, and should thus be identified with its spirit and with its movements. In many places a positive injury has arisen in the separation of the school from the Church. The children are placed under the control of irresponsible parties, and the Sunday-school superintendent, not unfrequently, places himself in a kind of antagonism to the minister. Such a course is ever disastrous. The lambs of the flock should be the special care of the minister, and he fails in his duty if he does not, in harmony with Church order, carefully supervise the interests of the school. He should not seek to supersede the superintendent, nor to interfere with his government of the school; but the superintendent and the teachers should

ever be in harmony with the preacher, and should consider themselves as but a part of his official staff.

The supervision of the minister should extend particularly to the selection of books for the library that is to be placed in the hands of the teachers and of the children of the school. It is but seldom that superintendents and teachers, engrossed with the busy cares of life, have full time to examine the multitudinous issues of the press which are sought to be placed in these libraries. Each publisher has a list of his own books, and wishes to sell them. He exchanges with other publishers, and thus may have a very large variety. He is so occupied with the financial affairs of his establishment that he may not know the precise character of the teachings of the books which he publishes. Without intending to do wrong, he recommends works which ought not to find their way into Sunday-schools. A committee is oftentimes appointed by the teachers to purchase a library. It is frequently composed of men who are good and earnest and true; but they are not extensively acquainted with religious literature, and they purchase such works as have pretty titles, are well printed, are recommended by publishers, and, above all, which are of a low price. In this way books of doubtful or erroneous doctrinal teachings, or which sanction unchristian conduct, or works of fiction without either high imagination

or beautiful style to recommend them, are placed in the library, and they vitiate rather than improve the taste. The books introduced into the Sunday-school should contain such doctrinal or practical teaching as may be in harmony with the Church; otherwise, the influence of the Sabbath-school may not only be of little service, but may even become of positive injury to the interests of the congregation. In this day of light and loose and skeptical publications, no duty is more imperative on the minister than to exercise a watchful supervision over the literature which is purchased by the Church, and is placed by the Church in the Sunday-school library for the use of its children. For the young have a right to regard the teachings of such works as sanctioned by the Church.

No matter how great may be the intellectual power and personal influence of the preacher, he cannot accomplish his work unaided and alone. He is the general of an army, but he cannot conquer without soldiers. He must have others to assist him. The duty of a preacher, then, is to study carefully the genius and organization of his Church, and to secure all the assistance which that organization can furnish. Whatever officers, whether elders or deacons, trustees or stewards or leaders, may constitute the officiary of his Church, he is to place himself in intimate relations with each and all of them. His study should be how to employ, to the utmost degree, their talents

in Church activities, so as to assist in Church development and in aggressive work. He should further study how to enlist the entire talent of his Church members, old and young, men and women, in spheres of active usefulness. This he should do, not only for the assistance which they give him, but for the benefit which results first to the Church, and then to themselves. The true teacher is ever a learner. There is no process by which our learning becomes accurate and methodical so soon as by attempting to communicate it to others; hence every one who is engaged in doing good is also engaged in self-development and culture. In different denominations Church organizations vary, but, be the organization what it may, the great object is to develop into perfect Christians the entire membership, and to act upon the world as an attractive and aggregating power which constantly adds to its own magnitude. There are some lines of Church work, however, which are common to all. First, there are social meetings in the Church, which all should be invited to attend. It should be the study of the preacher, on the one hand, to make these meetings interesting as well as profitable, and, on the other hand, to induce every member of his congregation to feel identified with them. Some he can skillfully draw into a religious conversation, others into prayer. In every assembly there are musical voices which should be cultured in and for divine worship. The minister should draw to the

prayer room the best singers of his congregation, who are willing to join in the simple songs of worship, and who may either lead or give volume to the voice of grateful song. For want of a little thoughtful attention no person may be present who can lead the singing, and the pleasure and profit of the evening is not only impaired, but many who are present will not return again. Upon others he can lay the duty of seeing that the room has been well aired, and that the sexton has made it comfortable. The pleasant conjuncture of external circumstances furnishes opportunity for pleasant and profitable meetings; but an illy ventilated room, one that is too cold or too warm, a broken pane of glass that admits a current of air, or a door which creaks on its hinges every time it is opened or shut, or, in country places, lamps that are untrimmed and smoking, destroy the pleasure of the congregation, and mar the profit of the meeting. All these external matters may be arranged by the foresight of the pastor, and his members will be blessed by being door-keepers or doing other service for the house of God.

The principles of ventilation are generally but poorly understood by sextons. They usually confound warm air with pure air, and keep the rooms closed to have them warm. The interest of many a service is destroyed by this means. People wonder what is the matter with their preacher and with themselves. They have no life, no enthusiasm. They

cannot have any when their lungs are loaded with impure exhalations, and the brain is oppressed with imperfectly oxygenated blood. I believe that the health of many a minister suffers severely, and his life is not unfrequently shortened, in consequence of the poor ventilation of crowded houses. I wish we could have an art school for sextons, if it were only possible to get them together; or a course of lectures; or, in default thereof, even a good manual to guide them in their duties. Some of them are intelligent and skillful, and worthy of praise; but too many, especially in small churches, are grossly ignorant. A minister with whom I was well acquainted related to me a scene he had witnessed. A church in a country place had been enlarged and repaired, and an opening service was to be held, at which he was invited to officiate. The trustees had bought a thermometer, and had charged the sexton he must keep the temperature from 60° to 70°, but must in no case permit it to be higher than 70°. The day was a little cool, and the minister noticed the sexton examining the thermometer, which hung against one of the columns. Then he put wood in the stove. In a few minutes afterward he examined the thermometer, and put more wood in the stove. After awhile he examined the thermometer again, and seemed in trouble. He opened the stove door; looked again, scratched his head, and, finally, as if a sudden thought struck him, he seized the thermom-

eter in both hands and rushed with it out of doors, determined to bring it down to 70°.

The minister will, also, need to study the temperaments and qualifications of his members for the spiritual work of the Church. He should aid the superintendent of the Sabbath-school in selecting teachers, and in urging those who are qualified to engage in that work. The love for Bible studies, and the zeal for their pursuit, will depend greatly on the spirit which the pastor may infuse among the teachers, and which shall through them pervade the Sabbath-school. The pastor will, also, need assistance in visiting the sick, and in calling upon strangers, and in inviting them to the house of God. This can be done most effectively by the co-operation of pious men and women, who can assist him in visiting and relieving cases of suffering, and in reporting their condition to him. Committees, properly appointed, may call upon strangers, and may gather many wanderers under the care of the Church. Such work, however, is seldom performed, systematically or properly, without the constant supervision of the pastor. Active associations should, also, be formed to employ the time and talents of the members of the congregation; such as lyceums or literary organizations for the young; societies for teaching the poor children to sew and to make plain clothing; Dorcas societies, for aiding the poor in procuring clothing and absolute necessaries in winter. The aim of the

minister should be to find some work to employ all the members of his congregation ; for in proportion as they work for the Master's cause they will be drawn most powerfully to a spiritual life. This benevolent movement of the congregation will, also, impress the public mind with admiration for the liberal and generous character of the Church. It was said of Christ, that he was full of grace and truth. This fullness of grace, or manifestation of favor and kindness to the people, distinguished his whole life. He healed the bodies first, the souls afterward ; and the ministers and Churches which show a deep sympathy for sorrow and wretchedness always powerfully impress the communities around them. Whoever has read the life of Pastor Oberlin, of Switzerland, will have a striking example of this. In this activity the Roman Catholic Churches generally excel the Protestants. Their various orders of women, such as Sisters of Charity and Sisters of Mercy, give them great facilities in organizing and sustaining hospitals and orphanages. These women, by their plain garb, by their apparent renunciation of the world, and by their devotion to benevolent work, impress the public mind beyond the pale of their own Church much more powerfully than do all their ministers combined. Protestantism has the ability to perform a similar work just as efficiently, and without the evils connected with those orders ; but it requires constant activity and associated effort

to produce the result. Active work is, also, necessary to give to each congregation unity and harmony. An inefficient congregation is generally a troublesome one. Among unemployed people discord and strife are sure to enter. The lines of Dr. Watts—

> "Satan finds some mischief still
> For idle hands to do,"

are illustrated every-where. There are men in every congregation who are exceedingly troublesome. They annoy the minister, and they annoy the people. They have an immense surplus energy, which is seeking for employment, and which, like surplus steam, makes a great deal of noise and interruption, while the steam which drives the factory is scarcely heard. Such persons need extra work, and must have it to be kept quiet. In one of Dr. Chalmers' ragged night-schools in Glasgow there was a boy who could not be controlled, and who was a constant interruption to the school. After bearing long with him, and making many fruitless efforts, it was resolved to expel him. The superintendent of the school, however, seeing elements of power in the boy, pleaded for one more trial. It was before the days of gas, or even kerosene lamps, and the school-room was lighted with common candles. These were placed on plain movable stands, such as were formerly used by shoemakers, and which consisted of an upright stick fastened into a square board, with an opening at the top of the stick through which a leather was drawn,

by which the candle was held. The candles needed frequent snuffing, and the superintendent appointed this uncontrollable boy general candle-snuffer. From the moment of his appointment he entered on his work with spirit, and became one of the best boys in the school. He simply needed to be employed. Luther, when a boy, was so restless at school that his master sometimes flogged him half a dozen times a day. God had put into his body a soul of power, which quivered all through him, so that he could not keep still. God had made him to shake all Europe. As he himself saw in a dream, the end of his quill as he wrote disturbed the pontiff on his throne; how could he keep still? Mothers often pride themselves on having nice little boys, that sit still in a nursery, and make no noise. Such boys will sit still all their lives, and will accomplish but little for their friends or the world. Give me the boy that cannot keep still; that upsets chairs, and throws every thing into confusion in the nursery; that at school can scarcely keep his elbows out of the sides of his associates; that is always an annoyance because of his readiness for adventure; and I will show you one who has in him the elements of great good if this can be properly employed. No matter how much steam there is in the locomotive, if it is kept on the track and has a heavy enough load to draw; but let it have no load, and get off the track, and the ruin will be terrible. So it is in our congregations. These men with sur-

plus energy will do mischief unless they are loaded down with work.

The successful minister must, also, study the organization of society. In rural districts there is comparatively little organism. The freedom and independence of an agricultural life produces a spirit of individuality. Each family relies upon its own efforts; draws from the earth its own support; and asks but few favors from its neighbors. But as soon as manufactories are established—as soon as towns and cities appear—organized society largely controls individual effort; the employer exercises a constant influence over the *employe;* and the tendency of civilization is to increase associated, and to diminish individual, power: the few control, the many obey. Such is society in Oriental lands that are densely populated. Such was society early in southern Europe, while the Germanic nations cultivated individuul freedom. The line of the Reformation marks the boundaries between society which receives its opinions from others and that which claims and exercises the right of private judgment. The increase of civilization always tends in this direction. The counterbalancing power is to be found in the education of the masses, and in their clear conceptions of their just rights. Vast corporations are established, where men are bound together, not only by ties of friendship, but, also, by ties of employment and interest. These form a kind of private society approaching

toward caste. Thus a kindred spirit exists among railroad men; their interests are mutual, almost identical; and large brotherhoods are formed, as among engineers, where the right of the individual, as to work or wages, is limited by the will of the society. Similar associations spring up among every class of mechanics; and latterly the men who live by the day's work in the simplest and most laborious occupations are, also, organized; and strikes in the mines, in manufactories, on railroads, and on the wharves of cities, illustrate the strength and closeness of these ties. The pulpit deals with individuals, not with organizations. Its truth comes to every individual heart, and every man acts on his personal responsibility before God. Yet the individual thus addressed is influenced by these associations, which may either help or retard the power of the pulpit. If the tone and influence of the association is hostile to the Church, the individual is either influenced to absent himself from the services, or to receive them with a prejudiced heart. But if the feeling of the association is friendly to the Church, then the individual is influenced to attend the services, and to look with favor on its ministrations. In this view an almost boundless field opens before the preacher. He must study the various interests and ramifications of these organizations, and must so manage his own conduct and so plan his services as to be most effective in gaining control over the different parts of the com-

munity. Societies, in this respect, are like a stick of timber, which must be split according to the grain; and the skillful woodsman will separate his timbers in a few moments, while the unskilled will expend much strength in vain. Who does not know the power of the president of a bank over all its subordinates? I have not unfrequently entered a bank and asked some question of one of the clerks without being able to obtain a civil answer. But if I asked for the president, and he received me cordially, walked with me to the door, and invited me to call again, the next time I entered every *employe* was not only civil, but polite. If I enter a factory, and the owner shows me with friendship through the building, the foreman of every department is ready to give me all information; but if I enter without such indorsement I am regarded as an intruder and unworthy of notice. These are but illustrations of the power of organization.

I ask your attention to these particular features, because, at this day, the masses of the people, as never before, are arranged in various organizations. They meet in their separate club-rooms; they are addressed by designing men; and too frequently an effort is made to array them against the Churches and against the ministry, that they may be better prepared for acts of lawlessness or violence. The communism and internationalism of Europe are arrayed against the Churches, because there the Church is

identified with the civil power. They regard the Church and the State as one, and the ministers as inseparably joined with those whom they regard as their oppressors. This feeling is one of the evils which arise from the union of Church and State, and I am not sure that God may not use it to destroy that unhallowed connection. In this country there is no such union, and there ought not to be any such association of thought or feeling. Yet the foreigners—and among us the communists are nearly all foreigners—bring their feelings with them. It must, also, be considered that, as the minister ever inculcates the principles of peace and submission to lawful authority, those who contemplate ultimate violence, or attacks upon the order of society, desire to destroy the influence of the ministry over society. Hence, the atheistic orator on the platform, and the proposer of violence on the sand-lots in San Francisco, work in perfect harmony. Their aim is one and the same, and that is to destroy the strongest influence which supports peace and order in the State, in the family, and among individuals. Christian people must seek some method by which they can better reach the hearts of these people, and antagonize the machinations of those who are plotting evil.

The limits of a lecture will not permit me to discuss the method by which these organizations, or sections of society, may be reached. Their structure must be studied; their influential men considered;

the influence of society which may counterpoise such men must, also, be considered; and then the minister will be prepared to throw his influence in such a way as may give him power over the hearts of the masses. I must allude, however, to what I think is the greatest barrier. Thus far, in this country, the difficulty does not exist in great opposition to the Church, but in a growing negligence of its ministration, arising from increased interest in and attention to these separate organizations. These associations controlling work and wages become of absorbing interest to the workmen. They contribute to the general funds a large part of their surplus earnings, and attend so many private meetings that they have little time or means to give the Churches, and are thus, almost unconsciously to themselves, led farther and farther away, and are in danger of being influenced by infidel or communistic ideas. I know no remedy but in the power of the Gospel most earnestly preached, with such zeal and moral power as shall tend to draw the people to the services, and then the more perfect identification of the minister with the people among whom he resides. Especially let him endeavor, both personally and by the aid of his people, to draw the children to the Sabbath-school, and to instill into their youthful hearts such thoughts and principles as lead them into harmony with the Church, and shall bring them early to the Saviour. Let him interest himself in the education of the

children, and in procuring proper situations for the neglected and destitute of these youth.

Let him, also, inquire into their wants and necessities; let them feel that he sympathizes with them in their labor and sorrow; let him approve their efforts, so far as is proper, to gain a better livelihood; then shall he have influence and power to caution them against prevailing errors, and against being governed by associations which lead to strife and violence. His membership, thus instructed, may become salt to save the mass in which they mingle, and may prevent the associations from doing the mischief which designing men intend.

Among collateral methods of usefulness the platform is one of the most efficient. The minister will frequently be called upon to join in efforts in behalf of benevolent movements. He will be requested to address audiences as to great social interests affecting the community in which he resides. These associations extend beyond the limits of any one Church or of any one denomination; yet they perform a work which is beneficial to all; and to them the minister should be ready to contribute his influence. Such, for instance, is the Bible Society, in which every Christian should have a deep and abiding interest. Whatever may be his theological views, he sincerely believes they are found in the word of God, and that the diffusion of that word—its being in every family and in every hand—would promote the gen-

eral benefit. The Bible Society, in its benevolent purpose to give the word of God without note or comment, to every individual, presents the purest benevolence and the highest catholicity of spirit. Associations for the promotion of temperance, also, claim the minister's attention. These associations, always good in their aim, are sometimes so conducted as to be productive of evil. If the ministry and religious people stand aloof, they will fall into the hands of men who will abuse the pulpit, and really prevent the permanent reform of those they are trying to save. These temperance movements are like John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Christian Church. Experience proves that unless the reformed men are converted, and brought into the fellowship and under the influence of the Church, the temperance excitement soon passes away, and they become worse than before. The only safety for the intemperate man is in the divine power which is promised in the Gospel. So, also, especially in cities, associations are organized to save the fallen and the outcasts, to guard against cruelty to little children, and even to dumb animals, to found orphanages, to provide homes for the aged who are friendless and destitute, and to furnish education to the deaf and dumb, the blind and the imbecile, to aid the poor, and to support hospitals. All these plans afford a common ground of Christian work; they are the glory of Christianity, in that they stoop to save the

lowest of the low and the vilest of the vile, as well as to lend a helping hand to the wretched and forlorn of every class. To aid in labors of this nature is fitting for the minister, for he is not merely the pastor of the Church, but a preacher sent from God to save and bless mankind. By these efforts, also, he will extend his influence beyond the sphere of his own congregations. The friends of these various reforms will love the minister who has plead their cause earnestly and successfully before the people, and not unfrequently they will be led to attend his ministrations.

He will be invited, however, to take part in services where he may not wisely go. Meetings may be held under some specious form, really designed to advance the political interests of some individual, or to denounce the political conduct of some rival. While the minister should feel a deep interest in every thing which affects the interests of his country, and while as a free man he has the unquestionable right to exercise the privileges of a citizen at the ballot, he should be careful, as a minister, not to take part in political meetings called for the purpose merely of promoting the interests of a party or of advocating the election of particular men. He should discriminate clearly between his privileges as a citizen, and the exercise of that influence which comes to him from the fact that he is ministering to the people in holy things.

The preacher will occasionally exchange pulpits with his brethren of his own denomination, and in these days of Christian courtesy he will, also, exchange with those of different denominations. The exclusiveness of spirit which once prevailed has, in great measure, happily passed away. While there may be a few Protestant congregations which fancy themselves to be the true Church of Christ, which arrogate for themselves the special favor of heaven, and close the doors of their pulpits against ministers of other Churches, handing us all over to the uncovenanted mercies of God, yet the great active branches of the Church are moving steadily forward to a broader platform and to a closer unity. The exclusive Churches, though strong and powerful in some localities, and striving, as they naturally do, to control the social influences of the country, yet, as compared with the liberal branches, do not relatively advance with much rapidity. In the pulpit exchanges which are thus made preachers should be exceedingly careful not to violate the rules of Christian courtesy in their selection of subjects; they should strictly avoid controversial topics, and especially those points on which they may personally differ from the creed of the congregation which they address. The broad fundamental truths of Christianity are common to all evangelical Christians. The points upon which we differ are comparatively few. As the salvation of the soul does not depend upon the philosophical views

which may be entertained, or upon the logical results which may seem to flow from them, the true preacher can find abundance of matter which is held in common, and on which he can address the congregation. Whoever teaches a living trust in the atonement of a divine Christ as the only hope for sinful man, and strict obedience to all that Christ commands, should be treated as one of the great brotherhood of Christianity. In this social intercourse of ministers and Churches true courtesy requires a conformity to the order of worship established in the different Churches or congregations. Any effort at proselytism from one branch of evangelical Churches to another should be most strictly avoided. Proselytism is a species of freebooting or piracy which ought to be as strictly condemned among Churches as among nations. I do not object to a change of Church relations where there is a change of doctrinal views, or where there is a firm conviction that under another form of Church polity the individual may receive greater spiritual profit to himself and his family, or may be able to do more good to a larger number of his fellow beings. Such instances not unfrequently occur; and individuals so changing should be kindly dismissed from their several Churches, with the prayer that the blessing of God may go with them. But when a Christian minister endeavors to draw away members from another communion, for the sake of enlarging and strengthening his own, he is not only

violating the laws of Christian courtesy, but the principles of common honesty. "Thou shalt not covet" is a law as applicable to men as to property. No minister should seek to enfeeble one Church to build up another. Nor is it honorable to intimate that his Church is so much more genteel, has so much better society, has men of business who can patronize and help young men, and that it holds the key to the door of select society, and, therefore, families should leave their own communion and enter his. If, under such influences, people are led from one Church to another, they are induced to make merchandise of the Gospel, and the spirit of a pure and earnest Christianity is defiled. Such an effort must prevent full co-operation between Christian Churches; for that co-operation can only be maintained where each Church is faithful to common courtesy. Nor is there need for such effort, for there are vast masses lying beyond the influence of any Churches; there is much ground yet to be occupied, and many families are going to ruin. You are builders, young gentlemen; let it be your aim to go out into the forest and cut down tall trees, hew them, square them, put them into your building, and raise a beautiful edifice to the glory of the great Head of the Church; but never descend so low as to steal squared timber from others to build your own.

Closely connected with this subject is the change of ministers from one denomination to another.

Where these denominations do not differ in doctrine, but are simply separated on questions of Church economy, which are of little moment, there can be no impropriety in a minister passing from one denomination to another, when circumstances seem to justify it. He preaches the same doctrine, and is identified with the same general usages. But where the Churches differ in doctrine such changes less frequently occur. They are, nevertheless, highly proper, when the minister is led to change his doctrinal views. If he becomes satisfied that he has been in error, and can no longer conscientiously preach the doctrines of the Church which has ordained him, and which supports him for the purpose of preaching doctrines which they believe are in accordance with the teachings of Christ, then his duty, not only as a Christian, but as a man of honor, is to resign his pulpit and to retire from the ministry of the Church whose doctrines he does not believe. I have never been able to understand how an honest man can wish to remain in the pulpit of a Church whose doctrines he cannot preach.

Such a man, so far as I can see, has either great obtuseness of intellect, or great lack of moral principle. There are denominations around him with some of whom he could affiliate, and into whose pulpits he would be readily welcomed. All the world is before him for his selection, or, as a Mohammedan once advised a dissatisfied teacher, he can set up a

ladder and climb to heaven alone. But there are changes occasionally made, as I believe, beyond the bounds of propriety. A minister sometimes leaves the communion in which he was converted and ordained, and joins another whose doctrines are greatly different, at the same time averring that he has not changed his doctrinal opinions, and that he believes and expects to preach the doctrines which he has heretofore held, and that his reasons for the change are simply those of personal convenience and comfort. Such changes I believe to be wrong in principle and disastrous in results. The minister occupies a false position both to himself and to his hearers. He is supposed by the public to represent doctrines which he does not believe. He cannot preach freely, on points of doctrinal difference, his own particular views without doing violence to the views of the Church which he enters. He suffers restaint, he compromises truth for comfort, the message of God for personal convenience, and diminishes his own self-respect and his spiritual power. He injures the congregation which he addresses, for he unsettles them in their views, brings among them a diversity of feeling, and sooner or later strife and discord will arise, and the Church will not be a united, homogeneous and vigorous body in its aggressive movements. The church may be for the time crowded to hear a man of talent and energy; its external circumstances may seem to flourish; but the heart

grows feeble, the vital power decays, and, at the end, discord, strife, and disintegration inevitably follow. The only exception is where, after his change of Church fellowship, the minister actually, from his judgment and heart, changes his doctrinal views, and can conscientiously preach in harmony with the views of the Church wherein he ministers. But the worst impression is made upon the world, which calls in question the honesty of ministers, and from such examples believes that they all hold their principles in the market, and are ready to sell to such as will give them the best pay and the most comfort. The injury thus done to the character of the ministry, in the loss of public respect for their conscientious convictions, outbalances, as I believe, all the good which such men can perform. The Churches and the ministers participating in such transactions, though they mean it not, are weakening the power of the Church over the public conscience more than the efforts of its strongest enemies.

The employment of evangelists to assist the regular preacher in his labors requires great caution. Evangelists are frequently of service, going, as they do, with fresh thoughts, and sometimes with strong faith acquired in scenes of conquest. They are able to say with boldness what the minister would utter with more delicacy. But the pastor should never give the control of the meeting to any evangelist or to any assisting preacher. If he does not hold the

control over his own meetings and keep his congregation in hand, the interest of the meeting will cease when the evangelist passes away. The persons who are drilled and exercised under a foreign influence will not be fused into the mass of the congregation; they will be comparing the methods of the evangelist with the methods of the pastor, and will complain of him because the interest or excitement does not continue. I have known a number of places where the visits of evangelists have resulted in the apparent awakening and conversion of great numbers; and yet in three or six months the Church has been in a worse condition than it was before the visit. Contention and strife have been substituted for harmony, and the benefits of the revival have been lost amid the discords and disturbances which have arisen. Better have no evangelist, however exciting, no brother pastor, however talented, who will not kindly co-operate with you, and move in consultation and in harmony with you.

Usually, however, the minister will need help in his protracted or special evangelistic efforts. His chief aim should be to make all his services so instructive, so spirited, and so earnest, that the Lord shall add daily to his congregation such as shall be saved. Yet, under special circumstances, he will find that such a general seriousness pervades his audiences, and such deep impressions are made, as will not only justify, but imperiously demand, the estab-

lishment of special services. At such seasons hearts bow more easily, as other hearts are bowed, and multitudes crowd to the services to see and to hear, because their friends or acquaintances are deeply interested. The minister should avail himself of all the laws of mind which bind men together, and which should lead to virtue and holiness, as they too frequently do to vice and degradation. Let him, then, get the utmost help he possibly can from his own membership, for the work will do them good, and they will be an abiding power; but let him, also, procure additional aid, either from his neighboring pastors, or from evangelists, as he may deem best, ever, however, retaining the management and control of the services.

There are matters which are not strictly ministerial, and which yet devolve in many places upon the preacher. A new church edifice is needed, but it will not be erected unless the minister procures subscriptions; and in many places it will not be properly planned or built without his supervision. He will sometimes find a congregation severely embarrassed with debt, which disheartens his people and prevents benevolent and aggressive movement. He finds it necessary to devote much of his time to securing means to liquidate the debt, that he may thereafter be unembarrassed in the pulpit. These things ought not so to be. After the apostolic example, the Churches should select men to attend to all financial matters,

that the minister may give himself wholly to the word of God and prayer. Yet, in many sections of the country, especially in new organizations, very little can be done without the active exertions of the minister. In these enterprises he needs great discretion and great energy. As a leader, he must inspire those with whom he comes in contact with courage and hopefulness, and by his personal influence must excite his congregation to a proper emulation in raising the necessary means. At the same time he must remember that these matters are secondary; that though he may find it necessary to work on the scaffolding, it is only that he may more successfully build materials into the grand spiritual temple.

He will need great wisdom and tact in his intercourse and councils with his Church officers, whether they be called elders, deacons, trustees, vestrymen, class-leaders, or stewards. They are the assistants of the pastors in the various departments of Church enterprise. They are generally devout and thoughtful men; yet, not unfrequently, they have marked peculiarities or eccentricities. They had the control of the Church before the present minister came; they expect to hold it should he retire. There are a few ministers who have such power over their congregations that they rule and control their Church officers with a rod of iron; but there are few such men. Men who have built large congregations, and

who are essential to the success of the enterprise, can thus govern. But the ordinary minister can only succeed by kind and careful co-operation with his various officers. Occasionally some of these are so peculiar and obstinate that it is dangerous to antagonize them. I heard Mr. Spurgeon once say that there was one difference between deacons and the devil. The Scripture says: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." But, said he, "Resist the deacons, and they will fly at you."

The Church has laid upon it, by its great Head, the duty of evangelizing the world. Each congregation should do something for this cause, and the minister should be deeply interested in this work. A part of this work may be performed near his own locality, by establishing cottage prayer-meetings, mission Sabbath-schools, and occasional preaching. But the work of the Church requires not only preaching, but sending out others to preach. The Church is to plead with its Lord and Master to thrust out laborers into the harvest, and the Church should endeavor to aid those who are so raised up and thrust out. The minister should so preach to himself and to his congregation that both he and they, according to their means, should be liberal contributors to this great work. For this purpose he should be well acquainted, first, with the missionary movements of his own denomination, the fields which they occupy, and the special objects to which the funds collected will be

in great measure applied. But for the sake of inspiring his congregation with broader views and with greater confidence in the approaching triumph of the Gospel, he should also be acquainted with the movements of all the Churches, and be able to present such a connected view of the whole missionary field, and of the movements making toward the occupancy of the whole world, as shall give confidence in ultimate success, and as shall inspire his people to become active co-workers with Christ. I believe the missionary cause, properly presented, more than any other, meets and subjugates the selfishness and local feelings of men. I believe, further, that to its influence we owe, in great measure, the large contributions which are made to-day to the erection of churches and to the endowment of literary institutions. It is true, these are not missionary in their character; but the missionary idea, in its immense grandeur, so fills the heart and enlarges its sympathy, and so counteracts the selfishness of every bosom, that it leads to grand and noble giving. In almost every instance the liberal benefactors of institutions have had their hearts touched and opened by this missionary spirit.

Other benevolent efforts will frequently demand his attention under the general recommendation of the Church or denomination to which he belongs. To these let him ever give due consideration, without fearing lest they shall endanger his support.

The minister who most fully identifies himself with every good cause, and who most fully performs all the work properly devolving upon him, will not only maintain a conscience void of offense, and enjoy the favor of God, but will, also, best secure the favor of his congregation and the approbation of the public. Such a man magnifies his ministry, blesses his age, and honors God.

LECTURE X.

IS THE MODERN PULPIT A FAILURE?

IT has become fashionable in certain circles to speak of the failure of the pulpit. It is represented as belonging chiefly to a past age, and it is declared that its power over men is passing away. Some of the writers for the daily press and some of the contributors to the literary reviews claim for themselves the distinguished honor of controlling the public mind. They speak of the power of the press, the number of readers whom they reach by their pen, and the immense influence which they exert in public affairs. In their glorification of the press they look upon the pulpit as a diminishing quantity—as an agency once potent, but which is now almost superseded. A few scientists, also—men of intellectual power and extensive learning, but of skeptical views—have wrought themselves into the belief that their discoveries in science have invalidated the authority of the holy Scriptures. They assail the pulpit, not so much on account of the character of its agency, as because they fancy the matter of preaching is becoming obsolete. They extol the triumphs of science, and call in question the possi-

bility of a revelation from God, and occasionally the very existence of a divine being. I do not desire to underrate the value of the press; it is one of the most powerful agencies, as it is, also, the offspring, of a Christian civilization. It has its place—a conspicuous place—in diffusing intelligence and in guiding the movements of society.

There should be no rivalry, much less should there be enmity, between the press and the pulpit. Each has its appropriate sphere, and the exaltation of the one does not diminish the glory of the other. Nor should there be any conflict between the pulpit and men of true science. Their spheres are widely different: the scientist is engaged in tracing the laws of matter and ascertaining the properties with which God has invested it; the preacher is engaged in proclaiming God's mercy and love as revealed to fallen man, and the precious promises which he has given of pardon for sin, of purification of heart, and of a glorious immortality. A few of those who occupy the pulpit very injudiciously assail the scientists, undervaluing their studies, and reproaching them for their attachment to science. Sometimes, also, a few who are uncultured, or who have failed to keep pace with scientific inquiries, announce propositions almost as absurd as those of the colored preacher of Richmond, who has recently been lecturing on "The sun, he do move." On the other hand, there are a few scientists who are as ignorant of the

Bible as the colored lecturer was of astronomy, and who make mistakes if not so palpable yet quite as ridiculous. Between such extremists in the pulpit and in the schools of science there is a conflict. But between the true minister and the true scientist there should be none whatever. They are engaged in studying different phases of truth. They occupy different stand-points, and if the pictures they present do not seem fully to harmonize, it arises from the limits of human vision and from the imperfections of human knowledge. The eye above and at the center can alone perceive and comprehend the harmony of the whole. There is another class of thinkers who are opposed to the pulpit because it proclaims the truths of the Bible; and the Bible is opposed to them. It denounces the judgments of God upon their sinful practices, and they hate the Bible and all who believe it. Such men talk of the failure of the pulpit, and with them "the wish is father to the thought." There are still others so absorbed in business and in various pursuits that they seldom attend a Church or hear a sermon. Possibly when they chanced to attend they were not pleased with the discourse, and their dissatisfaction with one sermon is extended to all; fancying because they care nothing for the pulpit that others sympathize with them, they also glibly talk of its failure.

I do not know precisely what these various classes mean when they use this phrase. Nor am I sure

that they perfectly understand themselves. A machine is a failure when it cannot perform the work for which it was designed. But the ignorance, or incapacity, or negligence of a workman, though causing failure on his part, is not properly charged as a failure of the mechanism. So the pulpit is a failure if it is not suited to perform the work for which it was instituted; but it is not a failure simply because some of its preachers may be unskillful or unworthy. There is a clear distinction between failures in the pulpit and the failure of the pulpit itself. The superintendent of a railroad may be a failure, while the railroad itself may be a great public benefit. A cook may be a failure, but the kitchen remains an imperative necessity.

Were I, then, to admit, as I readily do, that some preachers are failures—were I to go further, and admit that many are failures—nay, were we to suppose that nine out of every ten were failures—that would not constitute the pulpit a failure, while even one in ten makes it a grand and glorious success.

Is, then, the institution of the pulpit a failure, in view of its design? It was ordained to proclaim a divine message. That message is the word of God. Has it not spread this message far and wide? No one pretends that it has changed or mutilated the divine record. For eighteen hundred years that record, in its completed form, has been handed down from age to age. How many careful critics have

weighed every word, and considered every doubtful reading! There have been recensions of other works, but there is no book that has ever received a tithe of the attention which has been given to the Bible. Not only has it been carefully preserved in all its fullness and divine beauty, but it has been given to every leading language on the face of the globe—and parts of it have been translated into over two hundred dialects.

While by its agency that message has been preserved and translated, I frankly admit that the pulpit has not accomplished all that could be desired. It was designed to reach all nations and to influence all people. That work has not yet been fully done, and to this extent the Christian pulpit has, as yet, failed to perform its whole duty.

Nor do I claim for the pulpit that it has reached its highest perfection. Preachers have all the frailties and imperfections of their race. Too often they fail to accomplish properly their great work, and there is abundant cause for careful inquiry why the pulpit is not more efficient and successful. There may be a few men who make merchandise of the Gospel, seeking only positions of honor or emolument, who have no settled convictions, and who labor only where they can find the most comfortable homes and the largest salaries—whose only principles are concentrated in the question, "Will it pay?" There may even be a few who use the pulpit as a cloak for sin-

ister purposes and for vicious practices; but of all these the percentage is exceedingly small. It is deeply to be regretted that there are any such, for they not only discredit the cause, but bring suspicion on their brethren who have lofty and noble motives, and are of pure and holy conversation.

One cause of the failure of the pulpit is the lack of appreciation which is shown by ritualists. In the "Eighty-ninth Tract for the Times" the writer says: "We would not be thought entirely to depreciate preaching as the means of doing good. It may be necessary in a weak and languishing state; but it is an instrument which Scripture, to say the least, has never recommended." Views like these, if entertained, impair the estimation in which preaching should be held. As the natural result, the sermon is very short, and but little interest is attached to it. The chief attention is absorbed in the administration of the sacraments and in the proper performance of the ritual service.

Another reason why the pulpit is considered a failure is the lack of sympathy between the preacher and his congregation. I have heretofore alluded to the fact that a wall of partition is rising between the capitalist and the laborer, between the higher classes and the lower; and the masses generally identify the minister with the higher class of society. They contribute chiefly to his support, and have much influence in procuring his appointment. His dress,

deportment, and general habits, fit him for association with good society, and the masses are liable to feel that he is not one of them.

A few disobey the apostolic injunction, and do not give "attention to reading, to meditation and prayer." They are both ignorant and indolent, and sometimes cloak their disinclination to study under an assumed zeal for deep personal piety. Others are not men of one work. With them the ministry is made a convenience, while their minds and hearts are intent on other things. They neglect both their books and their flocks in their devotion to personal matters. This causes the ministry to be regarded simply as a profession, and veneration and respect for the pulpit are diminished. The divine element disappears, and they regard the preacher's teachings and advice simply as those of a physician or attorney. He is a minister simply to earn a livelihood.

In some cases that preparation of heart and that culture of spirit which should mark those who are truly sent of God are not apparent. The minister appears as a guest in the social circle—a "hail-fellow well met." He is engrossed with the movements of the day; outside of his pulpit he manifests but little concern for the salvation of the people. He meets them on the streets, joins them in social company, attends public gatherings, and goes with them on excursions. He is absorbed in the general movements of society, keeps a close eye on the stocks, ven-

tures into speculation, and shows little concern for a perishing world. He visits families, but makes little effort to lead the young to the Saviour. He is pleasant with the profligate and the gay, without seeming to be concerned at their danger or interested in their future welfare. Such ministers, though they may preach like angels in the pulpit, are of but little service to society.

In some instances the minister is shorn of his power by adopting an essay-like style of preaching; he selects a topic, and discusses it well; he skillfully explains the subject, but in an abstract form, which is not addressed to the hearts and consciences of his hearers. The pulpit is not the place for essays, however brilliant or sublime. The minister should pour forth truth from a warm and sympathetic heart, for the personal benefit and edification of his congregation, and to touch and elevate the aspirations of every individual. If the preacher is not expecting any present or immediate results, his message is in great measure powerless. In some instances, also, the minister enters the pulpit rather as a task. He preaches because the Sabbath has come and he must find something to say. He has nothing burning in his heart which he longs to utter—no message burdening his own spirit until he has delivered it to his congregation. He simply desires to preach a sermon that shall be acceptable to his people, and that shall maintain his popularity. In some cases he is more

concerned to learn how he is regarded than whether sinners have been awakened and brought to Christ, or whether some pure spirit has been receiving more and more of the likeness of the Saviour. All such preaching tends to lower the standard of the pulpit, and to diminish its power in public estimation.

Others illustrate chiefly the wisdom and benevolence of God, as displayed in creation and providence. They try to imitate Dr. Chalmers in his celebrated sermons on astronomy. Those discourses were remarkable for mental ability and wealth of illustration, but were not delivered at his Sabbath services. They were noon-day lectures in the week, as those of Mr. Cook at Boston; and multitudes of business men turned aside from their offices and stores to listen to his eloquent and powerful ministrations. They were sermons in every way worthy of their author, yet he preferred to occupy his pulpit on the Sabbath with topics more essential to human salvation. Endeavoring to imitate his example only in part, some young ministers devote their efforts to scientific discussions, give but little other food on the Sabbath—and the hungry sheep look up and are not fed. These topics are highly appropriate for lectures. They instruct and elevate the public mind. Allusions to such subjects, also, are oftentimes valuable in the illustration of scriptural truth; but Sabbath sermons on astronomy, geology, botany, or mineralogy, ought never to turn away the attention of the people from the cross of

Christ. That is the one topic of supreme importance and of enduring power. Besides, too frequently those who attempt these scientific discussions are not perfect masters of their subjects. Others seize some topic of the day, and occupy the hour in discussing chiefly the faults or excellences of public men or of public measures. The embezzlement and fall of a Tweed, or the awkwardness of a public executioner, give such men great relief, as they can then find something to preach about.

The minister should ever announce great principles which lie at the foundation of society—principles affecting the rights of man and the duties of the Government. But, valuable as are these topics, they should be but occasional and incidental. Sometimes, passing from these broad principles, the minister suffers himself to use the pulpit to promote the interests of a favorite political measure, which inures to the benefit of a party or to the aspiration of some individual. Such a course ever lowers the tone of the pulpit, and offends some of the congregation. It requires skill and tact and heroism to utter the high moral requirements of the law of God, and yet to avoid such declarations as in times of high party excitement may foster mere party or personal interests.

Still worse is it when the minister allows himself to be personally drawn into a political canvass. Parties are nearly equally balanced, and those in the minority fancy that the personal influence of the

preacher may turn a sufficient number of votes to make them triumphant. Hence they urge him to be a candidate. They dwell upon the great issues at stake. They tell him how greatly good men are needed in office, show him what a vast work he may perform, and endeavor to show him that it is really his duty to accept the nomination. Sometimes, alas! he is persuaded to do so; he leaves his pulpit, engages in the canvass, mingles in political scenes, if not in intrigues, and is absorbed for the time being in the pending issues. These instances are comparatively rare, and the minister conscientiously believes he is doing right; yet my conviction is that the result is always disastrous, both to himself and to the Church. It is disastrous to himself, in that his *status* is lowered even in the estimation of his political friends. They selected him not because they cared for him, or really desired his services, but because he was an available candidate. They flattered him to use him, and they henceforth regard him as a man that may be flattered and used. Had he declined the proffered nomination; had he said, "I have but one work to do; I must preach Christ and him crucified," he would have occupied a position of higher moral eminence But by those outside of his own party he is simply regarded as one who is ready to use his ministerial influence for the promotion of his personal ambition. If unsuccessful, years will pass away before he can regain the high moral influence which he

once exerted. If successful, his thoughts are turned from the pulpit. The questions which he considers, the associations in which he mingles, and the applications for office and assistance constantly pressed upon him, divert his attention from that course of reading and that character of mental study which gave him efficiency and power in the pulpit. As the result, he either returns to his ministry at the close of his official period a weaker and less efficient minister than before; or, what is more likely, having embarked on the political stream, he is borne onward by the current, never to return again. Thus one whom God has called to the ministry is, to that extent, lost to the cause of Christ. But the most disastrous result is, that the public understand that those who profess to be called of God have no such convictions as bind them to their work; that they are ready to exchange it for any position which they may consider more lucrative or more honorable. As one minister accepts such a nomination, the public infer that all would do so, if they were equally pressed; and hence that the ministry is regarded by the ministers themselves, not as a divine calling, but as an inferior position which they use as a stepping-stone to something higher. In this way the character of the ministry, in general, suffers immensely, while the individual, at the best, can be but slightly benefited.

I have stated this case in its least exceptionable form: much worse is it when a minister seeks a

nomination; when he voluntarily abandons the pulpit to mingle in party strife; or when he accepts of a clerkship, becomes an agent for insurance societies, or for selling pianos, or sewing machines, or patent medicines. Such men, I believe, do immense injury to the cause of Christ. It is proper, however, to say that these remarks apply only to those who have health and strength for the pulpit, and who are approved and desired by the Churches. When a minister's health becomes so impaired that he is unable to take a regular pastoral charge, it is right for him to engage in any honest calling for a livelihood; and when the Churches, for any cause, do not desire his ministerial services, he should be at perfect liberty to engage in other callings and duties, and to retire altogether from the active ministry.

Quite possibly all these cases have their root in the lack of a clear conviction of a divine call to the ministry, or of deep earnestness of spirit; for without earnestness a man accomplishes but little good. The earnest man, the man of convictions, who sees a perishing world, and believes God has sent him to help in rescuing it, will not turn aside from his high and holy calling. He will bear privation, face difficulties, endure hardships, and meet even death itself, rather than to turn to the right hand or to the left from the path which God has marked out. All the causes to which I have alluded contribute to the inefficiency of the pulpit, and give some color of

reason to those who proclaim the pulpit to be a failure. Yet all these instances, though to be deeply regretted, form but a small percentage when compared with the great body of efficient and devoted ministers who are toiling in the Master's vineyard. But why should the pulpit be singled out as a failure? When we speak of other professions, we do not say the bar is a failure because some attorney is incompetent or grossly immoral, or that education is a failure because some professed teachers are ignorant and vicious, or that medicine is a failure because some physicians are unworthy and wicked. Are bankers to be reproached because in almost every city some one has been guilty of embezzlement? are officers of government to be assailed because some have been guilty of fraud? If we look at the vast corporations where men have been selected for their skill and integrity, what a record do we find!

Not only does the pulpit bear a high and favorable comparison with other professions, but the modern pulpit is no less pure than in former ages. One in twelve of those whom Christ selected proved a traitor; another denied his Master, and all forsook him and fled. In the times of the apostles, Demas loved the present world, and others made shipwreck of faith. The address to the angels of the Churches in Asia Minor shows lukewarmness and error existing then. So, too, all along the current of the ages, men have had this treasure in earthen vessels, and

have been liable to infirmity and mistake. The preachers in the Middle Ages were scarcely worthy of the name, and the survival of the Church in the hands of such agents was a miracle of grace. How dark was the condition of the Church when the trumpet voices of Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, and Zwingle rang out in the ears of Europe in the sixteenth century! How terrible the satires of Erasmus upon the monks of his day! Read the pages of Bishop Burnet and of Macaulay, and how sad the picture of the English clergy! Listen to the Archdeacon of Carlisle, when, as late as 1785, he exhorted his clergy not to frequent ale-houses, or to mingle with men of the lowest classes on terms of equality. Making every allowance for cases of error and failure, the ministry of to-day is, I believe, as a whole, in mental culture, in purity of life, in self-devotion, and in deep piety, superior to the ministry of any period since the apostolic age. In all these respects the modern pulpit is not a failure as compared with the past.

It may sometimes be alleged that we have no such displays of power under the ministry of the word as were realized one hundred years ago under the ministry of Dr. Edwards in New England, of Asbury and Davies in Maryland and Virginia, and of Wesley and Whitefield in England. But it should be remembered that these cases were almost solitary. Now the spirit of revival is abroad; scarcely a year

passes without remarkable divine power being manifested in some of our city Churches, or in some of the rural districts. Many of the pastors are exceedingly successful. Many sermons are preached with divine unction, and multiplied thousands are annually brought to the knowledge of the truth. Great impressions, also, are sometimes made. I have been present more than once when whole congregations have risen to their feet, and have not unfrequently been freely bathed in tears. I have been present where in a single church hundreds have in a few weeks professed to experience the renewing power of divine grace. While there are no circumstances so singularly remarkable as may have been in the past, or which attract such extensive notice, I believe there are more conversions in the recent years than in any previous period in the history of Christianity.

But what shall supplant the pulpit if it be a failure? Some of the writers to which I have alluded extol the press, while they depreciate the pulpit, fancying that the pen is not only mightier than the sword, but is more potent than the tongue of fire. Such writers, however, might well consider that the press is an outgrowth of Christianity, and should assist and not impair its pulpit power. It is true that block printing was known in China before it was practiced in Europe. But it was the invention of movable types that gave to printing its great impulse and its

almost unlimited power. This invention was made in Christian lands, and was applied almost immediately to the printing and spread of the Bible. To-day, what is the power of the press beyond the limit of Christian countries? Such papers as the leading journals of England and America are unknown in lands outside of Christendom. The men who control the press, and give it its power, are the children of Christian mothers, the students of Christian schools, and are girt round and sustained by a Christian public opinion. While the press may assist the pulpit, it is the pulpit which indirectly gives life and power to the press. It forms the public mind, incites to reading and study, and prepares a host of readers to receive and enjoy its daily issues. Will any of these men who boast the power of the press establish a printing-office among the pagan Indians? Did any of them carry the daily press to the Fiji Islands? or to the New Hebrides or New Guinea? Christian missionaries went there; Christ crucified was preached; the people were evangelized; a religious press was established, and a secular press has slowly followed. These gentlemen of the press, with all their excellences and with all their enlightening powers, never undertook to civilize a savage nation by means of the press. They have no aspiration for martyrdom, or to be eaten by cannibals. Even a Stanley, who has been the boldest of the explorers connected with the press, started to find a Livingstone, who had gone

with a message from his divine Master, and the discoveries of Stanley have not led to the establishment of a daily paper in Central Africa; but they have led to the founding of missions, and they will soon witness the establishment of a religious press. To-day, every-where, grand as is the press, it is the religious press that throws its first rays of light across the gloom of heathen darkness, and that religious press is chiefly in the hands of men of the pulpit.

What do skeptical men of science propose to give us in lieu of the pulpit? Their objection against the pulpit is, as I have stated, not so much as to its agency, as to the message which it proclaims. With them the failure of the pulpit means the failure of Christianity, or, as they sometimes put it, the failure of Protestantism. These forms are essentially the same. The pulpit is the great agency of Christianity; where it flourishes or fails, so does the other. Protestantism is the most active form of Christianity, and in its services the pulpit occupies a leading position. Such writers often speak disparagingly of ministers and their work because they dislike the character of the work. They descend from their assumed lofty sphere, however, when they resort to personalities, and represent ministers as men of narrow intellect and of limited culture, of contracted views and of illiberal feeling; when they speak of them as teaching simply a creed, as having no eyes to the beauties of nature, or no broad conceptions of the universe in

which they dwell, and as not being identified with the great movements of society, or as taking but little interest in the humanitarian questions of the age. Such writers, also, assume for themselves great liberality and comprehensiveness of view. They see in every system of religion simply an accommodation to the weakness of men—something which acts upon their fears or excites their hopes; in short, a fiction that is serviceable to society in its primitive condition, for the preservation of order, and for the obedience of citizens. To them the system of Confucius, or of Mohammed, is about equal to Christianity, each being best suited to its own country and its own form of civilization. They fancy that all these systems are designed rather for the childhood of humanity, and that with its development and growth they shall give place to higher scientific teachings, and thus man shall be governed only by his native impulses under the control of his reason. Might we not ask upon what meat "these Cæsars feed," that they assume such lofty superiority? Have they books to read which are not in our hands? Have we not listened to the teachings of the same professors? Are not the laboratories open to us, also? Has nature revealed new secrets only to them? or has the Almighty endowed them alone with intellectual power? Nay, are they not, also, the children of Christian mothers? Were they not trained in Christian schools? These men, with all their lofty pretensions, have been

educated in institutions founded and endowed by Christian men, which have gained their prominence under the influence and patronage of the pulpit. They live in the midst of a generation of readers trained in the same schools, and molded and fashioned by the teachings of the pulpit, and their readers receive and enjoy their speculations. Where to-day is one distinguished scientist born beyond the pale of Christendom? Where is the scientist who is willing to take up his abode in heathen lands or among barbarous tribes, to civilize and enlighten them? Hostile to Christianity though they may be, they are willing to live only under the shadow of its institutions, and enjoy the benefits which a Christian civilization has prepared. These infidel scientists act madly when they assail the superstructure of Christianity. Were they able to grasp its pillars and to overthrow its structure, they would, like a blind Samson, bury themselves in its ruins. Their sphere does not necessarily bring them in contact with Christianity. Their assaults are voluntary and of malice prepense. To give them all they desire, they find a world produced they know not how, governed they know not by whom, and elements with certain appetencies they know not how constituted. They study the changes of a world which they tell us has long existed, of a universe with such unity of law that it must have been evolved, at least so far as each system is concerned, from a central magnitude. They tell

us that all classes of animated being have such rudimentary similarity and such affinities as point to one common origin, be it cellular tissue, protoplasm, or what not. They find a material universe, but they find no God. They find matter in multitudinous forms, but they find no spirit. If this be so, their researches keep them wholly out of the field of Christian thought and discovery, and they leave their proper pursuits when they seek to make a tilt at Christianity.

What do they propose to give us in its stead? Will they take us back to paganism, and make us to bow down to stocks and stones, and to offer human sacrifices? Will they extol Mohammedanism? What is it doing for humanity? Poor Turkey is fatally sick under its teachings, and would have died long ago had it not been kept galvanized by England's power. Will they give us the system of Confucius? Alas, the very dregs of Christian society are raising their hands in California, as if in holy horror, lest they may be contaminated by the influence of the race educated under its teachings! Will they take from suffering humanity all hope of a better life? from parting friends all hope of a reunion? from the loneliness of the grave the hope of a resurrection? from the human bosom all the aspirations of a glorious immortality which now ennoble and elevate Christian society? Must we die as brutes, without hope of future life? Has not the human heart already enough of beastly power, without the effort to quench

the light of a spiritual life which can govern and control?

But neither Christians nor Christian ministers are the enemies of science. Why should they be? All science is simply a perception of the thoughts of God—a discovery of what he designed when he spread out the heavens, and gemmed the infinitude of space with its myriad of worlds. The laws of light are simply the power with which the Creator invested it. All we can do is to find what he has written on its wings. The law of magnetism is the subtle power and the mode of action with which God has touched the loadstone. The laws of astronomy, what are they but the thoughts of God, as he projected worlds into space, and gave to them their orbits and their periods? Why should not Christians and Christian ministers love such studies? They reveal the wisdom, the power, and the benevolence of their great Father. Of nature, in all its expanse, of all created powers, visible and invisible, hath not God said, "All are yours?" Are we not "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ?"

History tells us that the leading schools of Europe were founded either by the clergy or under their advice and influence. The Protestant clergy, especially, have been patrons of science. The colleges and universities of America, with but here and there an exception, were either founded by Christian denominations, or by the State under the suggestions

of Christian ministers. They have filled the chairs of presidents and professors; they have taught the principles of science, both theoretically and practically, and have given even to these advanced scientists the greater part of that knowledge of which they boast. How comes it that these men are such a failure, if their students have become such giants?

I can accord to the scientist nearly all he can claim, without in the slightest degree affecting the foundations of my faith. Does he tell me this universe was created millions of ages ago? I do not deny it, for my Bible tells me it was "in the beginning," which may have been long before the millions of ages which he claims. Does he tell me that the laws which are in operation to-day have been in operation for millions of years? I admit it; and only add, that the great Lawgiver existed before these laws. Does he tell me of the boundlessness of space, of the infinitude of worlds? I rejoice the more, for all are the work of my Father's hands. Does he tell me that the laws of evolution show a development from the less to the greater? I accept all that; for, under the Gospel, from a sinner I become a saint, and from a saint I shall be exalted above the angels, and shall sit down with the Saviour on his throne. I believe in the survival of the fittest, for the Christian shall survive "the wreck of matter and the crush of worlds." Does he tell me that this evolution dispenses with the Creator? I say not so. There are

many things which are claimed in evolution, to which I must give the verdict of the Scotch jury, "Not proven." Yet, were I to admit them all, they would not affect my faith in the wisdom and skill and power of the great Father. I admire the skill of the watch-maker who produces an accurate time-piece; but how much more would I admire his skill if he so made one watch that it was capable not only of keeping time, but also of evolving a series of watches, each keeping better time than that which produced it, so that from the plainest, simplest form of a watch there should be eventually evolved a magnificent chronometer, with jeweled holes, whose time would not vary from the true time a second in a million of years! If the great Creator created but a germ, but in that germ were all possibilities of form and motion and magnitude, of atoms and of worlds, with their laws of motion so impressed on each that it should take its place in due time, my admiration for his wonderful skill would only he enhanced. Yet all that refers only to my dwelling-place, to my earthly surrounding, to the tabernacle in which I dwell. The revelation of God's mercy and love comes to me in a different line. They are not evolutions, but emanations. They come upon me from above, like the sunlight and rain of heaven. These men who talk of evolution claim an infinity of time. I ask, How long since this protoplasm developed into a turtle, the turtle into a monkey, or the monkey into a man?

They admit there is no positive record anywhere. Since human history began there is no instance of any animal ascending to the scale of man. If at all, it must have been far back in the distant ages. Then, I ask, why not give Christianity similar time? She is changing the face of creation; she is transforming sinners into saints, savages into enlightened men. She took them naked, rude, and uncultured, and has clothed, taught, and refined them. She has taken man, that bowed down to stocks and stones, and has elevated him until he uses the world as a work-shop and all elements as his instruments, until he feels that he is a son of God and his vicegerent upon earth. Why shall Christianity be called a failure, because it has not yet reached all the sons of men or transformed them into sons of science? Give her at least as much time to change millions of savages into enlightened humanity, millions of sinners into saints, as, according to their own asking, it takes to change one species into another. We promise that the whole world shall be brought to the foot of the cross before the evolutionist shall find even a single monkey transformed into a man.

If the Christian pulpit has failed, may we ask in what respect? Is the area of the earth's surface which it occupies diminishing? The writers who caricature Christianity particularly object to our sending missionaries to heathen lands. But in despite of ridicule they go. Sydney Smith, bidding farewell to one who

was going among cannibals, said, "I hope you will not disagree with the man who eats you." But, without regarding danger, they went. The world is their parish. They go every-where, and by their agency the Gospel is triumphing. Large portions of India and of southern Africa in the last half century have received Christian missionaries and Christian schools. The large island of Madagascar, previously intensely heathen, is now under Christian sway, and its prime minister recently attended an association of ministers. China has opened her doors; and presbyteries, associations, and conferences are organized and actively at work. Japan, that trampled on the cross, now listens to the Gospel, and sends her youth to Christian schools. Over a great part of western and central Asia, of northern and north-western America, and of western and central Africa, the Gospel has been preached by the missionaries of the cross. In no previous age of the world has the area of pulpit teaching been so rapidly and so widely extended. Nor has there been any failure in spreading it among people of different languages. The Bible has been translated during that period into the dialects of China and Japan, into dialects of Asia and Africa, as well as of the Indian tribes of America. There is no instance of Christian teaching or the power of the pulpit disappearing during the present century from any nation, or from any language into which it had entered. The languages of the Bible have, indeed, become the strong

languages of earth. Christian missionaries have done more than all other men of science combined for the introduction of truth into the languages of the world.

No one will pretend to say that the number of Christian pulpits has in any country during the last half century diminished. Every-where in Europe and America, in Asia and Africa, and in the islands of the sea, new church edifices have been erected in increasing numbers. In the United States, where we especially hear this cry of the failure of the pulpit, the statistics show a most wonderful increase. Professor Denian, of Brown University, states that the number of organized Churches in 1777 was less than 2,000. In 1870 there were over 72,000; while the increase of population had been from 3,000,000 to 38,000,000, showing an immense *pro rata* increase of the Churches over the population. We had no census tables prior to 1850, giving the value of church property. But in 1850 the returns show the estimated value to be $87,328,891. In 1870 the report exhibits $354,483,581, or an increase of more than fourfold, while the increase of population was only about sixty-five per cent. It is true, in this period the increase of sittings did not quite equal the comparative increase of population, but the large foreign immigration must be taken into account. The population had been transferred, but not their churches; yet even for this increase the sittings were nearly equal.

The increase of the number of communicants in the various Churches has considerably exceeded in its ratio the increase of population, thus showing the influence and power of the pulpit. As I have not these tables in full as to all the denominations, I need not give them as to any. The fact is well known that all the leading denominations are increasing in the number of their ministers, communicants, and church edifices.

If it be true that "where the treasure is, there will the heart be also," the wonderful increase of church property shows the influence of the pulpit over the popular mind, since such vast sums have been contributed to aid its cause.

The attachment of the masses to their churches has, also, been manifested in the recent panic through which our country has passed. For more than five years business has been depressed, banks have suspended, factories have closed, railroads have passed into the hands of receivers, merchants have gone into bankruptcy, and capitalists have failed; but during all that period church edifices have been erected and improved, Sunday-schools have been gathered, and the number of Church communicants has largely increased. During all that period how few churches have been closed, how few have been sold by the sheriff, or how few have been diverted from their proper use! If it be true that in times of financial embarrassment and distress men will give their money

only to what they deem matters of vast importance, have we not positive proof that the influence of the pulpit and the Church has in no wise been impaired or diminished. In this connection consider, also, the vast sums which have been given for the endowment of Christian colleges and seminaries. While I have not the exact figures, I believe the amount given in these years of national distress will compare most favorably with the contributions for similar periods in the most prosperous times.

Where, then, is the tendency to diminution seen? Is the pulpit losing the control of youth? This question needs only to be asked to be answered. Look at the Sunday-schools throughout the world. In the last fifty years what an immense advance has been made; almost the entire children of the land are now receiving instruction in the Churches on the Lord's day. That instruction, also, is of a higher character than formerly. The number of intelligent teachers has greatly increased. The books and papers to assist such teachers constitute a library in themselves. The increased interest is seen in the establishing of institutes, in the associations of teachers, in the publication of books, and in the establishment of libraries. The International Lessons are one indication of the coming unity of the world. The era of strife will be substituted by the era of peace, "and a little child shall lead them." No previous age of the world ever beheld one half the attention

paid to the youth of the land by the Church and by the pulpit as that which is seen to-day. If we pass outside of strictly Church work, and inquire for the colleges and training schools of the land, we find them, in large measure, under the patronage and control of some one of the Christian denominations. These men who boast of the failure of the pulpit found no schools, endow no colleges, establish no professional schools. The number of schools for training ministers has vastly increased in the last fifty years. But not a single school has been founded for the professed purpose of training infidels or infidel teachers. Even the schools of science to-day are chiefly under the control of the Christian denominations; and the vast majority of scientific professors are to-day attendants at Christian churches and devoted to Christian principles. But as the agitator makes himself heard while hundreds of conservatives remain quiet, so a few men of science, a small minority compared with the whole, have fancied themselves to be the representatives of science, and have arrogated to themselves the right to speak in her name.

Nor is the press by any means so generally in the hands of rationalistic thinkers as they would have us believe. The religious press is an element which these men have never estimated. Every denomination has its organs and its associated papers, which circulate by thousands in their various communities; and there are Sunday school papers and periodicals

which issue hundreds of thousands of copies weekly. Besides these papers there are magazines and reviews of a higher character which are published in the interest of the various Churches. These, in point of numbers, have a circulation immensely surpassing the issue of those critical papers which assume to be the leaders of thought. The strictly secular press of to-day gives a prominence to religious matters almost unknown thirty years ago; the proceedings of almost every Church meeting are published, while not unfrequently sermons appear in their columns. How is the pulpit a failure, when the secular press gives currency to sermons to an extent unknown in previous years. It is a recognition that their patrons desire these sermons, and an illustration of the increasing power, and not the failure, of the pulpit. More people attend church services this year than did ever before, more children are enrolled in the Sabbath-schools, more Bibles are published, more sermons are preached; there are more Christian scientists, professors, and writers, and there are more ministers intelligent and cultured, than were ever found in any other era of earth's history. It will not be denied that the pulpit was the chief agent in the overthrow of the idolatry of the world, of its infanticide, and of its gladiatorial exhibitions. As a fact in history, no nations ever abandoned their idols or cast away their imaginary gods but through the preaching of the Gospel, with the exception of a few instances

where Mohammedanism has supplanted among some Asiatic and African tribes heathen worship and customs. By the preaching of Christ heathen temples, shrines, and oracles were deserted. There is not on earth to-day a knee that bows to Jupiter or Mars or Venus; this same influence is exerted still. And if, in the last half century, we take the era of the modern pulpit, how wide has been the extension of its range, how remarkable its trophies! In that period it has spread through the islands of the seas, and nations grossly idolatrous, and some of them even cannibals, have become Christianized and enlightened. The inhabitants of Fiji, among the lowest of this class, have not only received the Gospel, but have sent native missionaries to other islands. How proud the record of Geddes, of whom it was said in the New Hebrides: "When he came, in 1846, there was not a Christian; when he left, in 1872, there was not a heathen."

Have not the wheels of Juggernaut been stopped in India? Wives no longer burn on the funeral piles of their husbands, and mothers do not throw their children into the Ganges to appease an imaginary deity. In our own country, as well as in Russia, human slavery has disappeared. With us it ended in civil convulsions; but its death knell had been already sounded from the pulpits of the land. To-day the pulpit is the great antagonist of intemperance, and the host of vices which follow in its train.

Consider, also, how much of its work has been preparatory. Years have been spent in acquiring languages, in translating the Bible, and preparing a Christian literature. Schools have been founded, and native missionaries have been trained. The Christian army has been drilled and equipped, and, I believe, is about to make an advance such as the world has never seen. Roman roads, and the protection of her Government, preceded Christianity's first great march. Printing and the compass heralded the Reformation. The steamship; the railroad tunneling mountains and spanning continents; the telegraph, with its multitudinous wires encircling the earth in its network; the mastery of all languages; the triumph of science and art, to me portend the coming of an era of universal light and glory. In that era the pulpit shall be, as it ever has been, a trumpet of glad tidings to the sons of men.

Every assault upon the pulpit in the past ages has left it stronger than ever before. It possesses a wonderful vitality, and where a true pulpit sends forth its utterances other pulpits will catch the inspiration. The preaching of reformers aroused the Roman Catholic Church, and a Loyola and a Xavier enlisted and trained their followers. In England the revivalists of the last century by their constant preaching stimulated the pulpits of the Established Church; and in America the different denominations provoke one another to love and good works.

The pulpit of to-day should be more powerful than that of any previous age. The preacher has more facilities for an accurate and extensive education, more helps to a thorough understanding of God's word. Investigation and research have brought into clearer light the meaning of various illustrations, and as the ages advance there is a brighter and more beautiful harmony between the volume of revelation and the works of God scattered throughout his universe. In despite of the votaries of a philosophy falsely so called, who seek to invalidate the Bible and to overthrow Christianity, each effort recoils upon its authors, and the claims of the Bible to a divine authorship become more and more apparent. There are glimpes of light long concealed which break forth every now and then, showing that He who inspired the Scriptures, thousands of years ago, was not unacquainted with those secrets of the universe which are being unfolded in these later times. As some inscription discovered on the bricks of Nineveh, or among the monuments of Egypt, throws light upon the customs of buried nations in the distant centuries; so these occasional glimpses connect the record of the past with the discoveries of the present. With all these helps, imparting both light and confidence, the preacher of to-day should be able to handle the word of the Lord more skillfully. As the Holy Spirit loves truth, and accompanies the truth to the hearts of the hearers, so we may expect a larger spir-

itual influence to attend the ministrations of the coming day.

The pulpit is still greatly needed. It is the great bond of union between the rich and the poor. Few understand the afflictions through which the lower classes pass, or the trials which they endure. Little do the upper classes of society know of their sufferings and their sorrows; their loss of employment and consequent loss of means of support; their narrow lodgings, scanty fare, and almost untold anguish. They instinctively shrink from the presence of those who live more comfortably and are unwilling to come into association with them. This unwillingness to associate strengthens sometimes into aversion, and then to positive hatred. Not until the minister by some act of kindness, by some manifestation of sympathy, by some effort in their behalf gains their confidence, do they open their hearts even to him.

It is the office of the minister to draw them to himself, that he may draw them to Christ. What a lesson do we find in the example of the blessed Saviour! Wise beyond all human wisdom, pure beyond all human holiness, he stooped to touch the most loathsome and vile. The crowds followed him because he did them good. He healed the sick, he fed the hungry, and then the common people heard him gladly. So, also, did the apostles. They were gifted with miraculous power to do the people good, and wherever they went society was stirred to its found-

ations. They were miraculously endowed because they had no power of themselves. They had neither money, position, or influence. They could command no resources, could confer no benefits. Times have changed. The Church has become strong, wealthy, and influential. The riches of the world are in the hands of Christian nations and Christian communities. While the minister may be able to do but little of himself, he has the public ear and public confidence. He is a bond of union, and the only bond of union, between the various classes of society. Educated and refined, he can associate with the wealthiest and the highest; at the same time, with limited means, and visiting among the masses, his heart is drawn toward them. If he be truly a man of God, he becomes a nucleus around which all the elements gather, attracted by his purity, benevolence, and love. Without this sympathy of heavenly origin which unlocks the hearts we may fear the Communism of Europe. The remedy for this fearful state of society lies in great measure in the faithfulness and sympathy of a ministry laboring for the poor as well as for the rich. Next to this is the provision which is made in Christian countries, and especially in America, for the education of their children. In this the United States are to-day in advance of all nations. Thus, according to Hubner's statistical tables, Russia has in a population of 10,000 150 children in its elementary schools; Italy has 708; Great Britain

and Ireland, 800; Austria and Hungary, 890; France, 990; the German Empire, 1,500; and the United States, 2,180. The Commissioner of Education in this country reports a higher number than these statistics show. Another counteracting influence lies in the free and intimate association of the children of all classes in our public schools; here the rich and the poor meet together, and a spirit of acquaintanceship and friendship binds the extreme classes together. The platform is one of intelligence and knowledge, and the son of the pauper and of the millionaire stand side by side. Under such circumstances deep-rooted enmity becomes almost impossible. I am frank to say that I view with no favor any efforts to establish parish schools by any denomination for elementary instruction. They separate classes; and if such a policy should become general, the same alienation prevailing in Europe would be realized here. Of public schools ministers generally have been the true and faithful friends.

I have now finished, young gentlemen, the present course of lectures. I have invited your attention to the various departments of your great work. I have presented you glimpses of my own experience, and I have set before you the duties of the sacred office in some measure as they rise before my mind. Before I bid you farewell, may I add a word personal to yourselves. Your exit from this institution, and your entrance practically into the ministry, will mark a

great era in the period of your lives. You pass from the retreat of the school into the activity of a busy world; from communion with kindred and cultured minds to become servants of a lost and ruined humanity. You go to lift out of the pit of degradation the most depraved and vicious; to draw the drunkard from his cups, and the young man from saloons of revelry and crime. You need moral courage; you need Christian heroism. Above all, you need power from on high. We are told that the Roman youth of noble family approaching years of maturity entered alone into a private apartment, amid the statues of the gods and of eminent men. In that august and solemn presence he divested himself of the raiment of his boyhood, and put on the manly toga. Then and there he made his vow to imitate the virtues of the great, to rival them in deeds of power, and to make for himself a name worthy of his kindred and ancestry. So as you go forth to enter on your life's duties, make a fresh consecration of all your powers to the service of God. Call around you the unseen; summon to your thoughts the great men of the pulpit who have shaken and moved the world; and there, with a cloud of holy angels above you, and in the immediate presence of the Son of God, whose eyes are like a flame of fire, pray to be clothed with divine power, to be encased in Christian armor, to have "your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet

shod with a preparation of the Gospel of peace ; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God : praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." Here resolve that all you are and all you have shall be devoted to this one work : that with all your energies and all your power you will strive against the powers of darkness, and to advance the kingdom of heaven, the Church of the living God ; resolve, God helping you, that the Gospel spoken from your lips shall never be spoken in vain, and that you will realize the utmost possibilities of divine power and grace in your ministry among men.

My thoughts glance beyond this assembly, and would peer far into the future. I know not what is before you ; God only knows whether you shall have years of labor and toil and danger and triumph, or whether you shall early be called into his own presence. As I look upon you, I seem to behold a halo above your heads ; rays of glory to come down from on high ; a tongue of fire that prophesies your mission. Who among you shall shine with the greatest radiance, shall wear the brightest crown, who shall be nearest the throne, I know not ; it will be he who, according to his talents and opportunity, does most for his blessed Master. There are degrees in glory. "One star differeth from another star in glory ; so,

also, is the resurrection." "The wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever." In that great day how insignificant shall appear the offices, or honors, wealth and comforts, of an earthly life compared with the crown which shall be given to those who have conquered souls for Christ! Could I live a thousand years, I would proclaim the great divine message. But almost as soon as we learn to work we must die. Had I a thousand lives, they should all be spent in the ministry of the word. If I could, I would inspire you with a noble ambition; I would give you strength to bear away the gates of the enemy, and to overcome my Master's foe. I would commission you to win triumph after triumph. I would strengthen you so that one of you should chase a thousand, and two of you should put ten thousand to flight. I have not the power, but there is One who has; he has all power in heaven and in earth, and he has promised to be with you wherever you may go. Into his hands and to his guiding providence I commit you every one, praying that the "God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."

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